

BOHN'S STANDARD LIBRARY.

---

RELIQUES  
OF  
ANCIENT ENGLISH POETRY.  
VOL. I.



821.08

P43 R. L. 1

acc no. 1611

21138  
/

~~821.08~~

BRITISH MUSEUM LIBRARY  
Cone 05 168 SRINAGAR.  
A-7100  
RELIQUES OF  
ANCIENT ENGLISH POETRY:

CONSISTING OF OLD HEROIC BALLADS, SONGS, AND OTHER  
PIECES OF OUR EARLIER POETS;

TOGETHER WITH  
SOME FEW OF LATER DATE.

By THOMAS PERCY, —  
LORD BISHOP OF DROMORE.

EDITED BY J. V. PRICHARD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



LONDON:  
GEORGE BELL & SONS, YORK ST., COVENT GARDEN,  
AND NEW YORK.

1892.



LONDON :

REPRINTED FROM THE STEREOTYPE PLATES BY WM. CLOWES & SONS, LTD.,  
STAMFORD STREET AND CHARING CROSS.

021106  
P41R

TO  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
ELIZABETH  
COUNTESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND:

IN HER OWN RIGHT

BARONESS PERCY, LUCY. POYNINGS, FITZ-PAYNE,  
BRYAN, AND LATIMER.

---

MADAM,

THOSE writers who solicit the protection of the noble and the great are often exposed to censure by the impropriety of their addresses: a remark that will perhaps be too readily applied to him who, having nothing better to offer than the rude Songs of ancient Minstrels, aspires to the patronage of the Countess of Northumberland, and hopes that the barbarous productions of unpolished ages can obtain the approbation or the notice of her, who adorns courts by her presence, and diffuses elegance by her example.

But this impropriety, it is presumed, will disappear, when it is declared that these poems are presented to your Ladyship, not as labours of art, but as effusions of nature, showing the first efforts of ancient genius, and exhibiting the customs and opinions of remote ages,—of ages that had been almost lost to memory, had not the gallant deeds of your illustrious Ancestors preserved them from oblivion.

No active or comprehensive mind can forbear some attention to the reliques of antiquity: it is prompted by natural curiosity to survey the progress of life and manners, and to inquire by what gradations barbarity was civilized, grossness refined, and ignorance instructed; but this curiosity, Madam, must be stronger in those who, like your Ladyship, can remark in every period the influence of some great Progenitor, and who still feel in their effects the transactions and events of distant centuries.

By such Bards, Madam, as I am now introducing to your presence, was the infancy of genius nurtured and advanced; by such were the minds of unlettered warriors softened and enlarged; by such was the memory of illustrious actions preserved and propagated; by such were the heroic deeds of the Earls of NORTHUMBERLAND sung at festivals in the hall of ALNWICK: and those Songs which the bounty of your ancestors rewarded, now return to your Ladyship by a kind of hereditary right; and, I flatter myself, will find such reception as is usually shown to poets and historians by those whose consciousness of merit makes it their interest to be long remembered.

I am, Madam,  
Your Ladyship's most humble  
and most devoted servant,  
THOMAS PERCY.



## ADVERTISEMENT TO THE EDITION OF 1876.

---

As early as the year 1794, when only the fourth edition of the *Reliques* had appeared, the Rev. Thomas Percy, acting as assistant-editor to his uncle, the Bishop of Dromore, hinted at the difficulty attendant upon such a composition as a collection of poems from a mutilated and incorrect manuscript. At that date Bishop Percy, his nephew, and a few friends were alone enabled to pass this judgment. To-day, however, the concealed manuscript is the property of the British Museum, its masterly edition<sup>1</sup> by Messrs. Hales and Furnivall rests in the hands of the public, and our knowledge of the original poems enables us to appreciate the extraordinary ingenuity displayed by the Bishop in his manipulation of the forty-five numbers extracted from his Folio Manuscript; nor is our admiration for his poetic genius other than redoubled by the discovery.

The Folio Manuscript itself, which has been too closely connected in the general mind with the *Reliques*, considering that the latter contains only about one-sixth of the contents of the former, is a narrow book, about fifteen and a half inches long by five and a half wide, which has been torn and cut, and is deficient in many parts.

It consists of a mass of some two hundred Sonnets, Ballads, Historical Songs, and Metrical Romances, transcribed, we are

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript. Ballads and Romances. Edited by C. W. Hales, M.A., and F. J. Furnivall, M.A. 4 vols. (Trübner & Co. 1868.)

assured, "from defective copies, or the imperfect recitation of illiterate singers; so that a considerable portion of the song or narrative is sometimes omitted, and miserable trash or nonsense not unfrequently introduced into pieces of considerable merit."<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Furnivall fixes the date of the handwriting to the year 1650, or thereabouts, and observes, "The dialect of the copies of the MS. seems to have been Lancashire."<sup>3</sup> Who this copier may have been still remains a mystery. Percy's suggestion that it was Thomas Blount has been dismissed as incredible.

Concerning the treatment of the text in Percy's selections, we have Mr. Furnivall's word that the Reverend Editor "looked upon it as a young woman from the country with unkempt locks, whom he had to fit for fashionable society."<sup>4</sup>

Be that as it may, the *Reliques* have admirably served their purpose; they have passed through at least thirty editions in various parts of the world; they rank among those works which have supported popularity for more than a century, and they may make their vaunt of having aroused the "Wizard of the North" to exclaim, "The first time I could scrape a few shillings together,—which were not common occurrences with me,—I bought unto myself a copy of the beloved volumes: nor do I believe I ever read a book half so frequently, or with half the enthusiasm."<sup>5</sup>

The endeavour of the present Editor has been in no way critical, nor has his end in view been the satisfaction of the "judicious antiquary" so much as the desire to effect a correct reproduction of the *Reliques* as put forth during Percy's life.

Consequently, the four earliest editions have been carefully

<sup>2</sup> Advertisement to the fourth edition of the *Reliques*, 1794.

<sup>3</sup> Percy's Folio MS. i., xiii.

<sup>4</sup> Percy's Folio MS. i., xvi.

<sup>5</sup> Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, chap. i.



collated with the Folio Manuscript, and with Professor Child's *English and Scottish Ballads* (edit. 1857, Boston).

The result is, a refinement and correction of the text, an improvement in the punctuation, and an enlarged Glossary. A comprehensive Index has also been prepared.

The original three volumes appear in two, though Percy's arrangement of Books remains unaltered and consecutive.

A few explanatory foot-notes, the fruit of late research, increase the already copious stock, but the paternity of all such is distinctly noted.

The work, then, of revision and addition merely aims at heightening the intrinsic merit of the early editions and at assisting in making the *Reliques* of 1875 an improved re-cast.

THE EDITOR.

Oct. 1875.



## PREFACE.

---

THE reader is here presented with select remains of our ancient English Bards and Minstrels, an order of men who were once greatly respected by our ancestors, and contributed to soften the roughness of a martial and unlettered people by their songs and by their music.

The greater part of them are extracted from an ancient folio MS. in the Editor's possession, which contains near two hundred Poems, Songs, and Metrical Romances. This manuscript was written about the middle of the last century; but contains compositions of all times and dates, from the ages prior to Chaucer, to the conclusion of the reign of Charles I.<sup>1</sup>

This manuscript was shown to several learned and ingenious friends, who thought the contents too curious to be consigned to oblivion, and importuned the possessor to select some of them, and give them to the press. As most of them are of great simplicity, and seem to have been merely written for the people, he was long in doubt whether, in the present state of improved literature, they could be deemed worthy the attention of the public. At length the importunity of his friends prevailed, and he could refuse nothing to such judges as the author of *The Rambler*, and the late Mr. Shenstone.

<sup>1</sup> Chaucer quotes the old romance of "Libius Disconius," and some others, which are found in this MS.—See the Essay in vol. ii. p. 89, et seq. It also contains several Songs relating to the Civil War in the last century, but not one that alludes to the Restoration.



Accordingly, such specimens of ancient poetry have been selected as either show the gradation of our language, exhibit the progress of popular opinions, display the peculiar manners and customs of former ages, or throw light on our earlier classical poets.

They are here distributed into **VOLUMES**, each of which contains an independent **SERIES** of poems, arranged chiefly according to the order of time, and showing the gradual improvements of the English language and poetry from the earliest ages down to the present. Each **VOLUME**, or **SERIES**, is divided into three **BOOKS**, to afford so many pauses or resting-places to the reader, and to assist him in distinguishing between the productions of the earlier, the middle, and the latter times.

In a polished age like the present, I am sensible that many of these reliques of antiquity will require great allowances to be made for them. Yet have they, for the most part, a pleasing simplicity, and many artless graces, which, in the opinion of no mean critics,<sup>2</sup> have been thought to compensate for the want of higher beauties, and if they do not dazzle the imagination, are frequently found to interest the heart.

To atone for the rudeness of the more obsolete poems, each volume concludes with a few modern attempts in the same kind of writing; and to take off from the tediousness of the longer narratives, they are everywhere intermingled with little elegant pieces of the lyric kind. Select ballads in the old Scottish dialect, most of them of the first-rate merit, are also interspersed among those of our ancient English minstrels; and the artless productions of these old rhapsodists are occasionally confronted with specimens of the composition of contemporary poets of a higher class,—of those who had all

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Addison, Mr. Dryden, and the witty Lord Dorset, &c.—See the *Spectator*, No. 70. To these might be added many eminent judges now alive. The learned Selden appears also to have been fond of collecting these old things.—See below.

the advantages of learning in the times in which they lived, and who wrote for fame and for posterity. Yet perhaps the palm will be frequently due to the old strolling Minstrels, who composed their rhymes to be sung to their harps, and who looked no further than for present applause and present subsistence.

The reader will find this class of men occasionally described in the following volumes, and some particulars relating to their history in an Essay subjoined to this Preface.

It will be proper here to give a short account of the other Collections that were consulted, and to make my acknowledgments to those gentlemen who were so kind as to impart extracts from them; for while this Selection was making, a great number of ingenious friends took a share in the work, and explored many large repositories in its favour.

The first of these that deserved notice was the Pepysian Library at Magdalen College, Cambridge. Its founder, Samuel Pepys, Esq.,<sup>3</sup> Secretary of the Admiralty in the reigns of Charles II. and James II., had made a large collection of ancient English ballads, near 2000 in number, which he has left pasted in five volumes in folio; besides garlands and other smaller miscellanies. This Collection, he tells us, was "begun by Mr. Selden; improved by the addition of many pieces elder thereto in time; and the whole continued down to the year 1700; when the form peculiar till then thereto, viz. of the black-letter with pictures, seems (for cheapness' sake) wholly laid aside for that of the white-letter without pictures."

In the Ashmole Library at Oxford is a small collection of ballads made by Anthony Wood in the year 1676, containing somewhat more than 200. Many ancient popular poems are also preserved in the Bodleian Library.

<sup>3</sup> A life of our curious collector, Mr. Pepys, may be seen in "The Continuation of Mr. Collier's Supplement to his great Dictionary, 1715, at the end of vol. iii. folio. Art. PEP."



The archives of the Antiquarian Society at London contain a multitude of curious political poems in large folio volumes, digested under the several reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, Elizabeth, James I., &c.

In the British Museum is preserved a large treasure of ancient English poems in MS., besides one folio volume of printed ballads.

From all these some of the best pieces were selected; and from many private Collections, as well printed as manuscript, particularly from one large folio volume which was lent by a lady.

Amid such a fund of materials the Editor is afraid he has been sometimes led to make too great a parade of his authorities. The desire of being accurate has perhaps seduced him into too minute and trifling an exactness; and in pursuit of information he may have been drawn into many a petty and frivolous research. It was, however, necessary to give some account of the old copies; though often, for the sake of brevity, one or two of these only are mentioned, where yet assistance was received from several. Where anything was altered that deserved particular notice, the passage is generally distinguished by two inverted 'commas:' and the Editor has endeavoured to be as faithful as the imperfect state of his materials would admit. For these old popular rhymes being many of them copied only from illiterate transcripts, or the imperfect recitation of itinerant ballad-singers, have, as might be expected, been handed down to us with less care than any other writings in the world. And the old copies, whether MS. or printed, were often so defective or corrupted, that a scrupulous adherence to their wretched readings would only have exhibited unintelligible nonsense, or such poor meagre stuff as neither came from the bard nor was worthy the press; when, by a few slight corrections or additions, a most beautiful or interesting sense hath started



forth, and this so naturally and easily, that the Editor could seldom prevail on himself to indulge the vanity of making a formal claim to the improvement; but must plead guilty to the charge of concealing his own share in the amendments under some such general title as a "Modern Copy," or the like. Yet it has been his design to give sufficient intimation where any considerable liberties<sup>4</sup> were taken with the old copies, and to have retained, either in the text or margin, any word or phrase which was antique, obsolete, unusual, or peculiar; so that these might be safely quoted as of genuine and undoubted antiquity. His object was to please both the judicious antiquary and the reader of taste; and he hath endeavoured to gratify both without offending either.

The plan of the work was settled in concert with the late elegant Mr. Shenstone, who was to have borne a joint share in it, had not death unhappily prevented him.<sup>5</sup> Most of the modern pieces were of his selection and arrangement, and the Editor hopes to be pardoned if he has retained some things out of partiality to the judgment of his friend. The old folio MS. above mentioned was a present from Humphrey Pitt, Esq., of Prior's-Lee, in Shropshire,<sup>6</sup> to whom this public acknowledgment is due for that and many other

<sup>4</sup> Such liberties have been taken with all those pieces which have three asterisks subjoined, thus \* \* \*.

<sup>5</sup> That the Editor hath not here underrated the assistance he received from his friend, will appear from Mr. Shenstone's own letter to the Rev. Mr. Graves, dated March 1st, 1761.—See his Works, vol. iii. letter ciii. It is doubtless a great loss to this work that Mr. Shenstone never saw more than about a third of one of these volumes, as prepared for the press.

<sup>6</sup> Who informed the Editor that this MS. had been purchased in a library of old books, which was thought to have belonged to Thomas Blount, author of the *Jocular Tenures*, 1679, 4to, and of many other publications enumerated in Wood's *Athenæ*, ii. 73; the earliest of which is *The Art of making Devises*, 1646, 4to., wherein he is described to be "of the Inner Temple." If the collection was made by this lawyer (who also published the *Law Dictionary*, 1671, folio), it should seem, from the errors and defects with which the MS. abounds, that he had employed his clerk in writing the transcripts, who was often weary of his task.



obliging favours. To Sir David Dalrymple, Bart., of Hales, near Edinburgh, the Editor is indebted for most of the beautiful Scottish poems with which this little miscellany is enriched, and for many curious and elegant remarks with which they are illustrated. Some obliging communications of the same kind were received from John MacGowan, Esq., of Edinburgh; and many curious explanations of Scottish words in the glossaries from John Davidson, Esq., of Edinburgh, and from the Rev. Mr. Hutchinson, of Kimbolton. Mr. Warton, who has twice done so much honour to the Poetry Professor's chair at Oxford, and Mr. Hest, of Worcester College, contributed some curious pieces from the Oxford libraries. Two ingenious and learned friends at Cambridge deserve the Editor's warmest acknowledgments: to Mr. Blakeway, late Fellow of Magdalen College, he owes all the assistance received from the Pepysian Library; and Mr. Farmer, Fellow of Emanuel, often exerted in favour of this little work that extensive knowledge of ancient English literature for which he is so distinguished.<sup>7</sup> Many extracts

<sup>7</sup> To the same learned and ingenious friend, since Master of Emanuel College, the Editor is obliged for many corrections and improvements in his second and subsequent editions; as also to the Rev. Mr. Bowle, of Idmestone, near Salisbury, editor of the curious edition of *Don Quixote*, with Annotations, in Spanish, in 6 vols. 4to; to the Rev. Mr. Cole, formerly of Blecheley, near Fenny-Stratford, Bucks; to the Rev. Mr. Lambe, of Noreham, in Northumberland (author of a learned *History of Chess*, 1764, 8vo, and editor of a curious Poem on the *Battle of Flodden Field*, with learned notes, 1774, 8vo); and to G. Paton, Esq., of Edinburgh. He is particularly indebted to two friends, to whom the public, as well as himself, are under the greatest obligations: to the Honourable Danes Barrington, for his very learned and curious *Observations on the Statutes*, 4to; and to Thomas Tyrwhitt, Esq., whose most correct and elegant edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, 5 vols. 8vo, is a standard book, and shows how an ancient English classic should be published. The Editor was also favoured with many valuable remarks and corrections from the Rev. Geo. Ashby, late Fellow of St. John's College, in Cambridge, which are not particularly pointed out, because they occur so often. He was no less obliged to Thomas Butler, Esq., F.A.S., agent to the Duke of Northumberland, and Clerk of the Peace for the county of Middlesex, whose extensive knowledge of ancient writings, records, and history has been of great use to the Editor in his attempts to illustrate the literature or manners of our



from ancient MSS. in the British Museum and other repositories were owing to the kind services of Thomas Astle, Esq., to whom the public is indebted for the curious Preface and Index annexed to the Harleian Catalogue.<sup>s</sup> The worthy librarian of the Society of Antiquaries, Mr. Norris, deserved acknowledgment for the obliging manner in which he gave the Editor access to the volumes under his care. In Mr. Garrick's curious collection of old Plays are many scarce pieces of ancient poetry, with the free use of which he indulged the Editor in the politest manner. To the Rev. Dr. Birch he is indebted for the use of several ancient and valuable tracts. To the friendship of Dr. Samuel Johnson he owes many valuable hints for the conduct of the work. And if the glossaries are more exact and curious than might be expected in so slight a publication, it is to be ascribed to the supervisal of a friend who stands at this time the first in the world for northern literature, and whose learning is better known and respected in foreign nations than in his own country. It is perhaps needless to name the Rev. Mr. Lye, editor of Junius's *Etymologicum*, and of the *Gothic Gospels*.

The names of so many men of learning and character the Editor hopes will serve as an amulet, to guard him from every unfavourable censure for having bestowed any attention on a parcel of Old Ballads. It was at the request of many of these gentlemen, and of others eminent for their genius and taste, that this little work was undertaken. To prepare it for the press has been the amusement of now and then a vacant hour amid the leisure and retirement of rural life,

ancestors. Some valuable remarks were procured by Samuel Pegge, Esq., author of that curious work the *Curialia*, 4to; but this impression was too far advanced to profit by them all; which hath also been the case with a series of learned and ingenious annotations inserted in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for August, 1793; April, June, July, and October, 1794; and which it is hoped will be continued.

<sup>s</sup> Since keeper of the Records in the Tower

and hath only served as a relaxation from graver studies. It has been taken up at different times, and often thrown aside for many months, during an interval of four or five years. This has occasioned some inconsistencies and repetitions, which the candid reader will pardon. As great care has been taken to admit nothing immoral and indecent, the Editor hopes he need not be ashamed of having bestowed some of his idle hours on the ancient literature of our own country, or in rescuing from oblivion some pieces (though but the amusements of our ancestors) which tend to place in a striking light their taste, genius, sentiments, or manners.

\* \* \* Except in one paragraph, and in the notes subjoined, this preface is given with little variation from the first edition in MDCCLXV.



## CONTENTS OF VOLUME THE FIRST.



1. Essay on the ancient Minstrels in England	PAGE
2. Notes and Illustrations	xxiii
	xlv

### BOOK THE FIRST.

1. The ancient Ballad of Chevy-Chase	1
2. The Battle of Otterbourne	12
Illustration of the Names in the foregoing Ballads	24
3. The Jew's Daughter A Scottish Ballad	26
4. Sir Cauline	28
5. Edward, Edward. A Scottish Ballad	41
6. King Estmere	42
On the word Termagant	52
7. Sir Patrick Spence. A Scottish Ballad	54
8. Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne	56
9. An Elegy on Henry, fourth Earl of Northumberland, by Skelton	65
10. The Tower of Doctrine, by Stephen Hawes	73
11. The Child of Elle	75
12. Edom [Adam] o' Gordon. A Scottish Ballad	81

### BOOK THE SECOND.

(CONTAINING BALLADS THAT ILLUSTRATE SHAKSPEARE.)

Essay on the Origin of the English Stage	88
1. Adam Bell, Clym o' the Clough, and William of Cloudesly	106
2. The Aged Lover renounceth Love	128
3. Jephthah Judge of Israel	130
4. A Robyn, Jolly Robyn	132
5. A Song to the Lute in Musicke	134
6. King Cophetua and the Beggar-Maid	135
7. Take thy Old Cloak about thee	138
8. Willow, Willow, Willow	142
9. Sir Lancelot du Lake	146
10. Corydon's Farewell to Phillis	150
The Ballad of Constant Susannah	ib.
11. Gernutus, the Jew of Venice	151



	PAGE
12. The Passionate Shepherd to his Love, by Marlow . . . . .	158
The Nymph's Reply, by Sir W. Raleigh . . . . .	160
13. Titus Andronicus's Complaint . . . . .	161
14. Take those Lips away . . . . .	166
15. King Leir and his Three Daughters . . . . .	ib.
16. Youth and Age, by Shakspeare . . . . .	172
17. The Frolicksome Duke, or the Tinker's good Fortune. . . . .	173
18. The Friar of Orders Gray . . . . .	176

## BOOK THE THIRD.

1. The more modern Ballad of Chevy Chace . . . . .	180
Illustration of the Northern Names . . . . .	191
2. Death's final Conquest, by James Shirley . . . . .	192
3. The Rising in the North . . . . .	193
4. Northumberland betrayed by Douglas . . . . .	200
5. My Mind to me a Kingdom is . . . . .	208
6. The Patient Countess, by W. Warner . . . . .	210
7. Dowsabell, by Drayton . . . . .	216
8. The Farewell to Love, from Beaumont and Fletcher . . . . .	221
9. Ulysses and the Syren, by S. Daniel . . . . .	ib.
10. Cupid's Pastime, by Davison . . . . .	224
11. The Character of a Happy Life, by Sir H. Wotton . . . . .	226
12. Gilderoy. A Scottish Ballad . . . . .	227
13. Winifreda . . . . .	230
14. The Witch of Wokey . . . . .	231
15. Bryan and Pereene. A West India Ballad, by Dr. Grainger . . . . .	234
16. Gentle River, Gentle River. Translated from the Spanish . . . . .	236
17. Alcanzar and Zayda. A Moorish Tale . . . . .	242

## BOOK THE FOURTH.

1. Richard of Almaine . . . . .	246
2. On the death of K. Edward I. . . . .	249
3. An original Ballad by Chaucer . . . . .	252
4. The Turnament of Tottenham . . . . .	254
5. For the Victory at Agincourt . . . . .	264
6. The Not-browne Mayd . . . . .	265
7. A Balet by the Earl Rivers . . . . .	278
8. Cupid's Assault. By Lord Vaux . . . . .	279
9. Sir Aldingar . . . . .	282
10. The Gaberlunzie man, Scottish. By K. James V. . . . .	289
11. On Thomas Lord Cromwell . . . . .	292
12. Harpalus. An ancient English Pastoral . . . . .	294
13. Robin and Makyne. An ancient Scottish Pastoral . . . . .	298
14. Gentle Herdsman, tell to me . . . . .	302
15. K. Edward IV. and the Tanner of Tamworth . . . . .	305
16. As ye came from the Holy Land . . . . .	312
17. Hardyknute. A Scottish Fragment. By Sir J. Bruce . . . . .	314

BOOK THE FIFTH.

	PAGE
1. A Ballad of Luther, the Pope, a Cardinal, and a Husbandman . . . . .	327
2. John Anderson my Jo. A Scottish Song . . . . .	332
3. Little John Nobody . . . . .	333
4. Q. Elizabeth's Verses, while Prisoner at Woodstock . . . . .	336
5. The Heir of Linne . . . . .	337
6. Gascoigne's Praise of the Fair Bridges, afterwards Lady Sandes . . . . .	344
7. Fair Rosamond. By Thomas Delone . . . . .	347
8. Queen Eleanor's Confession . . . . .	356
9. The Sturdy Rock . . . . .	359
10. The Beggar's Daughter of Bednal-Creen . . . . .	360
An Essay on the word FIT, and the ancient Ballad-singing . . . . .	368
11. Fancy and Desire. By the Earl of Oxford . . . . .	371
12. Sir Andrew Barton . . . . .	373
13. Lady Anne Bothwell's Lament. A Scottish Song . . . . .	384
14. The Murder of the King of Scots . . . . .	386
15. A Sonnet by Q. Elizabeth . . . . .	388
16. The K. of Scots and Andrew Browne. By W. Elderton . . . . .	390
17. The Bonny Earl of Murray. A Scottish Song . . . . .	395
18. Young Waters. A Scottish Ballad . . . . .	396
19. Mary Ambree . . . . .	399
20. Brave Lord Willoughby . . . . .	402
21. Victorious Men of Earth. By James Shirley . . . . .	405
22. The Winning of Cales . . . . .	406
23. The Spanish Lady's Love . . . . .	409
24. Argentile and Curan. By W. Warner . . . . .	412
25. Corin's Fate . . . . .	422
26. Jane Shore . . . . .	423
27. Corydon's doleful Knell . . . . .	432



# AN ESSAY

## ON

### THE ANCIENT MINSTRELS IN ENGLAND.

---

I. The MINSTRELS (A) were an order of men in the Middle Ages, who subsisted by the arts of poetry and music, and sang to the harp verses composed by themselves, or others.<sup>1</sup> They also appear to have accompanied their songs with mimicry and action, and to have practised such various means of diverting as were much admired in those rude times, and supplied the want of more refined entertainment (B). These arts rendered them extremely popular and acceptable in this and all the neighbouring countries, where no high scene of festivity was esteemed complete that was not set off with the exercise of their talents, and where, so long as the spirit of chivalry subsisted, they were protected and caressed, because their songs tended to do honour to the ruling passion of the times, and to encourage and foment a martial spirit.

The Minstrels seem to have been the genuine successors of the ancient Bards (C), who, under different names, were admired and revered from the earliest ages among the people of Gaul, Britain, Ireland, and the North, and indeed by almost all the first inhabitants of Europe, whether of Celtic or Gothic race;<sup>2</sup> but by none more than by our own Teutonic ancestors,<sup>3</sup> particularly by all the Danish tribes.<sup>4</sup> Among these they were distinguished by the name of SCALDS, a word

(A) The larger notes and illustrations referred to by the letters (A) (B), &c., are thrown together to the end of this Essay.

<sup>1</sup> Wedded to no hypothesis, the Author hath readily corrected any mistakes which have been *proved* to be in this Essay; and considering the novelty of the subject, and the time and place when and where he first took it up, many such had been excusable. —That the term *minstrel* was not confined, as some contend, to a mere *musician* in this country, any more than on the Continent, will be considered more fully in the last note (G G) at the end of this Essay.

<sup>2</sup> Vide Pelloutier, *Hist. des Celtes*, tom. 1, l. 2, c. 6, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Tacit. de Mor. Germ. cap. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Vide Bartholin. *De Causis contemptæ a Danis Mortis*, lib. 1. cap. 10. — Wormii *Literatura Runicæ*, ad finem — See also “Northern Antiquities, or a Description of the Manners, Customs, &c., of the ancient Danes and other Northern Nations; from the French of M. Mallet.” London, printed for T. Carnan, 1770, 2 vols. 8vo.



peculiarly denoted their art, continues still in our own language to be of all others the most expressive of that popular mirth and jollity, that strong sensation of delight, which is felt by unpolished and simple minds (1).

II. Having premised these general considerations, I shall now proceed to collect from history such particular incidents as occur on this subject; and, whether the facts themselves are true or not, they are related by authors who lived too near the Saxon times, and had before them too many recent monuments of the Anglo-Saxon nation, not to know what was conformable to the genius and manners of that people; and therefore we may presume that their relations prove at least the existence of the customs and habits they attribute to our forefathers before the Conquest, whatever becomes of the particular incidents and events themselves. If this be admitted, we shall not want sufficient proofs to show that Minstrelsy and Song were not extinct among the Anglo-Saxons, and that the professor of them here, if not quite so respectable a personage as the Danish Scald, was yet highly favoured and protected, and continued still to enjoy considerable privileges.

Even so early as the first invasion of Britain by the Saxons an incident is recorded to have happened which, if true, shows that the Minstrel or Bard was not unknown among this people, and that their princes themselves could, upon occasion, assume that character. Colgrin, son of that Ella who was elected king or leader of the Saxons in the room of Hengist,<sup>1</sup> was shut up in York, and closely besieged by Arthur and his Britons. Baldulph, brother of Colgrin, wanted to gain access to him, and to apprize him of a reinforcement which was coming from Germany. He had no other way to accomplish his design but to assume the character of a Minstrel. He therefore shaved his head and beard, and, dressing himself in the habit of that profession, took his harp in his hand. In this disguise he walked up and down the trenches without suspicion, playing all the while upon his instrument as a Harper. By little and little he advanced near to the walls of the city, and making himself known to the sentinels, was in the night drawn up by a rope.

Although the above fact comes only from the suspicious pen of Geoffrey of Monmouth (κ), the judicious reader will not too hastily reject it, because if such a fact really happened, it could only be known to us through the medium of the British writers; for the first Saxons, a martial but unlettered people, had no historians of their own, and Geoffrey, with all his fables, is allowed to have recorded many true events that have escaped other annalists.

We do not however want instances of a less fabulous era, and more indubitable authority; for later history affords us two remarkable facts (L), which I think clearly show that the same arts of poetry and song, which were so much admired among the Danes, were by no means unknown or neglected in this sister nation; and that the

<sup>1</sup> See Rapin's Hist. (by Tindal, fol. 1732, vol. 1, p. 36), who places the incident here related under the year 495.



privileges and honours which were so lavishly bestowed upon the northern Scalds were not wholly withheld from the Anglo-Saxon Minstrels.

Our great King Alfred, who is expressly said to have excelled in music,<sup>2</sup> being desirous to learn the true situation of the Danish army, which had invaded his realm, assumed the dress and character of a minstrel (M); when, taking his harp, and one of the most trusty of his friends disguised as a servant,<sup>3</sup> (for in the early times it was not unusual for a minstrel to have a servant to carry his harp), he went with the utmost security into the Danish camp; and though he could not but be known to be a Saxon by his dialect, the character he had assumed procured him a hospitable reception. He was admitted to entertain the king at table, and stayed among them long enough to contrive that assault which afterwards destroyed them. This was in the year 878.

About sixty years after,<sup>4</sup> a Danish king made use of the same disguise to explore the camp of our king Athelstan. With his harp in his hand, and dressed like a minstrel (N. Aulaff,<sup>5</sup> king of the Danes, went among the Saxon tents; and, taking his stand near the king's pavilion, began to play, and was immediately admitted. There he entertained Athelstan and his lords with his singing and his music, and was at length dismissed with an honourable reward, though his songs must have discovered him to have been a Dane (O). Athelstan was saved from the consequences of this stratagem by a soldier, who had observed Aulaff bury the money which had been given him, either from some scruple of honour, or motive of superstition. This occasioned a discovery.

Now if the Saxons had not been accustomed to have minstrels of their own, Alfred's assuming so new and unusual a character would have excited suspicions among the Danes. On the other hand, if it had not been customary with the Saxons to show favour and respect to the Danish Scalds, Aulaff would not have ventured himself among them, especially on the eve of a battle (P). From the uniform procedure, then, of both these kings we may fairly conclude that the same mode of entertainment prevailed among both people, and that the Minstrel was a privileged character with each.

But, if these facts had never existed, it can be proved from undoubted records, that the Minstrel was a regular and stated officer in the court of our Anglo-Saxon kings; for in *Domesday-book*, *Joculator Regis*, the King's Minstrel is expressly mentioned in Gloucestershire; in which county it should seem that he had lands assigned him for his maintenance (Q).

### III. We have now brought the inquiry down to the Norman

<sup>2</sup> By Bale and Spelman.—See note (M).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Anno 938.—Vide Rapin, &c.

<sup>5</sup> So I think the name should be printed, rather than Anlaff, the more usual form (the same traces of the letters express both names in MS.), Aulaff being evidently the genuine northern name Olaff, or Olave, Lat. Olaus. In the old Romance of *Hero-Childe*, (See vol. ii. page 95,) the name of the king his father is Allof, which is evidently Ollaf, with the vowels only transposed.



Conquest; and as the Normans had been a late colony from Norway and Denmark, where the Scalds had arrived to the highest pitch of credit before Rollo's expedition into France, we cannot doubt but this adventurer, like the other northern princes, had many of these men in his train who settled with him in his new duchy of Normandy, and left behind them successors in their art: so that, when his descendant, William the Bastard, invaded this kingdom in the following century,<sup>6</sup> that mode of entertainment could not but be still familiar with the Normans. And that this is not mere conjecture will appear from a remarkable fact, which shows that the arts of Poetry and Song were still as reputable among the Normans in France as they had been among their ancestors in the north; and that the profession of Minstrel, like that of Scald, was still aspired to by the most gallant soldiers. In William's army was a valiant warrior, named Taillefer, who was distinguished no less for the minstrel arts (B) than for his courage and intrepidity. This man asked leave of his commander to begin the onset, and obtained it. He accordingly advanced before the army, and with a loud voice animated his countrymen with songs in praise of Charlemagne and Roland, and other heroes of France; then rushing among the thickest of the English, and valiantly fighting, lost his life.

Indeed, the Normans were so early distinguished for their minstrel-talents, that an eminent French writer (s) makes no scruple to refer to them the origin of all modern poetry, and shows that they were celebrated for their songs near a century before the Troubadours of Provence, who are supposed to have led the way to the poets of Italy, France, and Spain.<sup>7</sup>

We see, then, that the Norman Conquest was rather likely to favour the establishment of the minstrel profession in this kingdom, than to suppress it: and although the favour of the Norman conquerors would be probably confined to such of their own countrymen as excelled in the minstrel arts; and in the first ages after the Conquest no other songs would be listened to by the great nobility, but such as were composed in their own Norman-French; yet as the great mass of the original inhabitants were not extirpated, these could only understand their own native Gleemen or Minstrels, who must still be allowed to exist, unless it can be proved that they were all proscribed and massacred, as, it is said, the Welsh Bards were afterwards by the severe policy of King Edward I. But this we know was not the case; and even the cruel attempts of that monarch, as we shall see below, proved ineffectual (s 2).

The honours shown to the Norman or French Minstrels by our princes and great barons, would naturally have been imitated by their English vassals and tenants, even if no favour or distinction had ever been shown here to the same order of men in the Anglo-Saxon and

<sup>6</sup> Rollo was invested in his new duchy of Normandy A.D. 912. William invaded England A.D. 1066.

<sup>7</sup> Vide Hist. des Troubadours, 3 tom. passim; and vide Fableaux ou Contes des XII. et du XIII. Siècle, traduits, &c., avec des Notes historiques et critiques, &c., par M. Le Grand. Paris, 1781. 5 tom. 12mo.



Danish reigns. So that we cannot doubt but the English Harper and Songster would, at least in a subordinate degree, enjoy the same kind of honours, and be received with similar respect, among the inferior English gentry and populace. I must be allowed, therefore, to consider them as belonging to the same community, as subordinate members at least of the same college; and therefore, in gleaning the scanty materials for this slight history, I shall collect whatever incidents I can find relating to minstrels and their art, and arrange them, as they occur in our own annals, without distinction; as it will not be always easy to ascertain, from the slight mention of them by our regular historians, whether the artists were Norman or English. For it need not be remarked, that subjects of this trivial nature are but incidentally mentioned by our ancient annalists, and were fastidiously rejected by other grave and serious writers; so that, unless they were accidentally connected with such events as became recorded in history, they would pass unnoticed through the lapse of ages, and be as unknown to posterity as other topics relating to the private life and amusements of the greatest nations.

On this account it can hardly be expected that we should be able to produce regular and unbroken annals of the minstrel art and its professors, or have sufficient information whether every minstrel or harper composed himself, or only repeated the songs he chanted. Some probably did the one, and some the other; and it would have been wonderful indeed, if men whose peculiar profession it was, and who devoted their time and talents to entertain their hearers with poetical compositions, were peculiarly deprived of all poetical genius themselves, and had been under a physical incapacity of composing those common popular rhymes which were the usual subjects of their recitation. Whoever examines any considerable quantity of these, finds them in style and colouring as different from the elaborate production of the sedentary composer at his desk or in his cell, as the rambling harper or minstrel was remote in his modes of life and habits of thinking from the retired scholar or the solitary monk (r).

It is well known that on the Continent, whence our Norman nobles came, the bard who composed, the harper who played and sang, and even the dancer and the mimic, were all considered as of one community, and were even all included under the common name of Minstrels.<sup>a</sup> I must therefore be allowed the same application of the term here, without being expected to prove that every singer composed, or every composer chanted, his own song; much less that every one excelled in all the arts which were occasionally exercised by some or other of this fraternity.

IV. After the Norman Conquest, the first occurrence which I have met with relating to this order of men is the founding of a priory and hospital by one of them; scil. the Priory and Hospital of St. Bartholomew, in Smithfield, London, by Royer or Raherus, the King's Minstrel, in the third year of King Henry I., A.D. 1102. He was the

<sup>a</sup> See notes (B) and (AA)



first Prior of his own establishment, and presided over it to the time of his death (T 2).

In the reign of King Henry II. we have upon record the name of Galfrid, or Jeffrey, a harper, who in 1180 received a corrody, or annuity, from the abbey of Hyde, near Winchester; and, as in the early times every harper was expected to sing, we cannot doubt but this reward was given to him for his music and his songs; which, if they were for the solace of the monks there, we may conclude would be in the English language (U).

Under his romantic son, King Richard I., the minstrel profession seems to have acquired additional splendour. Richard, who was the great hero of chivalry, was also the distinguished patron of poets and minstrels. He was himself of their number, and some of his poems are still extant.<sup>9</sup> They were no less patronized by his favourites and chief officers. His Chancellor, William Bishop of Ely, is expressly mentioned to have invited singers and minstrels from France, whom he loaded with rewards; and they in return celebrated him as the most accomplished person in the world (U 2). This high distinction and regard, although confined perhaps in the first instance to poets and songsters of the French nation, must have had a tendency to do honour to poetry and song among all his subjects, and to encourage the cultivation of these arts among the natives; as the indulgent favour shown by the monarch or his great courtiers to the Provençal *Troubadour*, or Norman *Rymour*, would naturally be imitated by their inferior vassals to the English Gleeman or Minstrel. At more than a century after the Conquest, the national distinctions must have begun to decline, and both the Norman and English languages would be heard in the houses of the great (U 3); so that probably about this era, or soon after, we are to date that remarkable intercommunity and exchange of each other's compositions, which we discover to have taken place at some early period between the French and English Minstrels; the same set of phrases, the same species of characters, incidents, and adventures, and often the same identical stories, being found in the old metrical romances of both nations (V).

The distinguished service which Richard received from one of his own minstrels, in rescuing him from his cruel and tedious captivity, is a remarkable fact, which ought to be recorded for the honour of poets and their art. This fact I shall relate in the following words of an ancient writer:<sup>1</sup>—

“The Englishmen were more than a whole yeare without hearing any tydings of their King, or in what place he was kept prisoner. He

<sup>9</sup> See a pathetic Song of his in Mr. Walpole's Catalogue of Royal Authors, vol. i. p. 5. The reader will find a translation of it into modern French in Hist. Littéraire des Troubadours, 1774, 3 tom. 12mo. See vol. i. (p. 58), where some more of Richard's poetry is translated. In Dr. Burney's Hist. of Music, vol. ii. p. 238, is a poetical version of it in English.

<sup>1</sup> Mons. Favine's Theatre of Honour and Knighthood, translated from the French. Lond. 1623, fol. tom. ii. p. 49. An elegant relation of the same event (from the French of Presid. Fauchet's "Recueil," &c.) may be seen in "Miscellanies in Prose and Verse by Anna Williams, Lond. 1766." 4to, p. 46. It will excite the reader's admiration to be informed that most of the pieces of that collection were composed under the disadvantage of a total deprivation of sight.



had trained up in his court a Rimer or Minstrill,<sup>2</sup> called Blondel de Nesle, who) so saith the manuscript of Old Poesies,<sup>3</sup> and an auncient manuscript French Chronicle) being so long without the sight of his Lord, his life seemed wearisome to him, and he became confounded with melaucholly. Knowne it was that he came backe from the Holy Land; but none could tell in what countrey he arrived. Whereupon this Blondel, resolving to make search for him in many countries, but he would heare some newes of him; after expence of divers dayes in travaile, he came to a towne<sup>4</sup> (by good hap) neere to the castell where his maister King Richard was kept. Of his host he demanded to whom the castell appertained, and the host told him that it belonged to the Duke of Austria. Then he enquired whether there were any prisoners therein detained or no; for alwayes he made such secret questionings wheresoever he came. And the hoste gave answer, there was one onely prisoner, but he knew not what he was, and yet he had bin detained there more than the space of a yeare. When Blondel heard this, he wrought such meanes, that he became acquainted with them of the castell, *as Minstrels doe easily win acquaintance any where*;<sup>5</sup> but see the king he could not, neither understand that it was he. One day he sat directly before a window of the castell, where King Richard was kept prisoner, and began to sing a song in French, which King Richard and Blondel had sometime composed together. When King Richard heard the song, he knew it was Blondel that sung it; and when Blondel paused at halfe of the song, the King *began the other half, and completed it*.<sup>6</sup> Thus Blondel won knowledge of the King his maister, and returning home into England, made the Barons of the countrie acquainted where the King was." This happened about the year 1193.

The following old Provençal lines are given as the very original song;<sup>7</sup> which I shall accompany with an imitation offered by Dr. Burney, ii. 237:—

<sup>2</sup> Favine's words are, "Jongleur appelé Blondiaux de Nesle." (Paris, 1620, 4to. p. 1106.) But Fauchet, who has given the same story, thus expresses it, "Or ce roy ayant nourri un Menestrel appelé Blondel," &c. liv. ii. p. 92. "Des anciens Poëtes François." He is however said to have been another *Blondel*, not *Blondel* (or *Blondiaux*) *de Nesle*; but this no way affects the circumstances of the story.

<sup>3</sup> This the author calls in another place "An ancient MS. of old Poesies, written about those very times."—From this MS. Favine gives a good account of the taking of Richard by the Duke of Austria, who sold him to the emperor. As for the MS. chronicle, it is evidently the same that supplied Fauchet with this story. See his "Recueil de l'Origine de la langue et Poesie Française, Ryme, et Romans," &c. Par. 1581.

<sup>4</sup> Tribales.—"Retrudi eum præcepit in Triballis: a quo carcere nullus ante dies istos exivit."—Lat. Chron. of Otho of Austria: apud Favine.

<sup>5</sup> "Comme Menestrels s'accoltent legerement."—Favine. (Fauchet expresses it in the same manner.)

<sup>6</sup> I give this passage corrected; as the English translator of Favine's book appeared here to have mistaken the original:—Scil. "Et quant Blondel eut dit la moitié de la Chanson, le Roy Richart se prist a dire l'autre moitié et l'acheva."—Favine, p. 1106. Fauchet has also expressed it in nearly the same words.—Recueil, p. 93.

<sup>7</sup> In a little romance or novel, entitled, "La Tour Tenebreuse, et les Jours Lumineux, Cortes Angloises, accompagnez d'Historiettes, & tirez d'une ancienne Chronique composee par Richard, surnomme Cœur de Lion, Roy d'Angleterre," &c. Paris, 1705, 12mo.—In the preface to this romance the editor has given another song of Blondel de Nesle, as also a copy of the song written by King Richard, and published by Mr.



## BLONDEL.

Domna vostra beutas  
 Elas bellas faissos  
 Els bels oils amoros  
 Els gens cors ben taillats  
 Don sleu empresenats  
 De vostra amor que mi lia.

*Your beauty, lady fair,  
 None views without delight,  
 But still so cold an air  
 No passion can excite:  
 Yet this I patient see  
 While all are shunn'd like me.*

## RICHARD.

Si bel trop affansia  
 Ja de vos non portrai  
 Que major honoral  
 Sol en votre deman  
 Que sautra des belsan  
 Tot can de vos volria.

*No nymph my heart can wound  
 If favour she divide,  
 And smiles on all around  
 Unwilling to decide:  
 I'd rather hatred bear  
 Than love with others share.*

The access which Blondel so readily obtained in the privileged character of a Minstrel, is not the only instance upon record of the same nature (v 2). In this very reign of King Richard I., the young heiress of D'Evreux, Earl of Salisbury, had been carried abroad and secreted by her French relations in Normandy. To discover the place of her concealment, a knight of the Talbot family spent two years in exploring that province, at first under the disguise of a Pilgrim; till having found where she was confined, in order to gain admittance he assumed the dress and character of a Harper, and being a jocose person, exceedingly skilled in "the *Gests* of the antients"<sup>8</sup> (so they called the romances and stories which were the delight of that age), he was gladly received into the family. Whence he took an opportunity to carry off the young lady, whom he presented to the king; and he bestowed her on his natural brother, William Longespee (son of fair Rosamond), who became in her right Earl of Salisbury (v 3).

The next memorable event which I find in history reflects credit on the English minstrels: and this was their contributing to the Rescue of one of the great Earls of Chester, when besieged by the Welsh. This happened in the reign of King John, and is related to this effect.<sup>9</sup>

Hugh, the first Earl of Chester, in his charter of foundation of St. Werburg's Abbey in that city, had granted such a privilege to those who should come to Chester fair, that they should not be then apprehended for theft or any other misdemeanour, except the crime were committed during the fair. This special protection occasioning a multitude of loose people to resort to that fair, was afterwards of signal benefit to one of his successors. For Ranulph, the last Earl of

Walpole, mentioned above (in note 9, page xxx.); yet the two last are not in Provençal like the sonnet printed here; but in the old French, called *Lanyage Roman*.

<sup>8</sup> The words of the original, viz. "Citharisator homo jocosus in Gestiis antiquorum valde peritus," I conceive to give the precise idea of the ancient Minstrel.—See note (v 2). That *Gesta* was appropriated to romantic stories, see note (1) part iv. (1.)

<sup>9</sup> See Dugdale (Bar. i. 42, 101), who places it after 13 John, A.D. 1212.—See also Plot's Staffordsh. Camden's Britann. (Cheshire.)



Chester, marching into Wales with a slender attendance, was constrained to retire to his castle of Rothelan (or Rhuydland), to which the Welsh forthwith laid siege. In this distress he sent for help to the Lord de Lacy, Constable of Chester: "Who, making use of the Minstrells of all sorts, then met at Chester fair; by the allurements of their musick, got together a vast number of such loose people, as, by reason of the before specified privilege, were then in that city; whom he forthwith sent under the conduct of Dutton (his steward)," a gallant youth, who was also his son-in-law. The Welsh, alarmed at the approach of this rabble, supposing them to be a regular body of armed and disciplined veterans, instantly raised the siege and retired.

For this good service, Ranulph is said to have granted to De Lacy, by charter, the patronage and authority over the minstrels and the loose and inferior people: who, retaining to himself that of the lower artificers, conferred on Dutton the jurisdiction of the minstrels and harlots:<sup>1</sup> and under the descendants of this family the minstrels enjoyed certain privileges and protection for many ages. For even so late as the reign of Elizabeth, when this profession had fallen into such discredit that it was considered in law as a nuisance, the minstrels under the jurisdiction of the family of Dutton are expressly excepted out of all acts of parliament made for their suppression; and have continued to be so excepted ever since (w).

The ceremonies attending the exercise of this jurisdiction are thus described by Dugdale,<sup>2</sup> as handed down to his time, viz. "That at midsummer fair there, all the Minstrels of that countrey resorting to Chester do attend the heir of Dutton, from his lodging to St. John's church (he being then accompanied by many gentlemen of the countrey), one of the Minstrels' walking before him in a surcoat of his arms depicted on taffata; the rest of his fellows proceeding (two and two) and playing on their several sorts of musical instruments. And after divine service ended, give the like attendance on him back to his lodging; where a court being kept by his [Mr. Dutton's] steward, and all the Minstrels formally called, certain orders and laws are usually made for the better government of that Society, with penalties on those who transgress."

In the same reign of King John we have a remarkable instance of a minstrel, who to his other talents superadded the character of Soothsayer, and by his skill in drugs and medicated potions was able to rescue a knight from imprisonment. This occurs in Leland's Narrative of the GESTES of Guarine (or Warren) and his sons, which he "excerptid owte of an old Englisch boke yn ryme,"<sup>3</sup> and is as follows:—

Whittington Castle in Shropshire, which together with the coheiress of the original proprietor had been won in a solemn tournament by the ancestor of the Guarines,<sup>4</sup> had, in the reign of King John, been seized

<sup>1</sup> See the ancient record in Blount's Law Dictionary. (Ant. Minstrel.)

<sup>2</sup> Bar. i. p. 101.

<sup>3</sup> Leland's Collectanea, vol. i. pp. 261, 266, 267.

<sup>4</sup> This old feudal custom of marrying an heiress to the knight who should vanquish



by the Prince of Wales, and was afterwards possessed by Morice, a retainer of that prince, to whom the king, out of hatred to the true heir, Fulco Guarine (with whom he had formerly had a quarrel at chess<sup>5</sup>), not only confirmed the possession, but also made him governor of the Marches, of which Fulco himself had the custody in the time of King Richard. The Guarines demanded justice of the king, but obtaining no gracious answer, renounced their allegiance and fled into Britagne. Returning into England, after various conflicts, "Fulco resortid to one John of Raumpayne, a Sothisayer and Jocular and Minstrelle, and made hym his spy to Morice at Whittington." The privileges of this character we have already seen, and John so well availed himself of them, that in consequence of the intelligence which he doubtless procured, "Fulco and his brethrene laide waite for Morice, as he went toward Salesbyri, and Fulco ther woundid hym: and Bracy," a knight, who was their friend and assistant, "cut off Morice [']s] hedde." This Sir Bracy being in a subsequent rencounter sore wounded, was taken and brought to King John; from whose vengeance he was, however, rescued by this notable minstrel; for "John Rampayne founde the meanes to cast them, that kepte Bracy, into a deadely slepe; and so he and Bracy cam to Fulco to Whittington," which on the death of Morice had been restored to him by the Prince of Wales. As no further mention occurs of the minstrel, I might here conclude this narrative; but I shall just add, that Fulco was obliged to flee into France, where, assuming the name of Sir Amice, he distinguished himself in justs and tournaments; and, after various romantic adventures by sea and land, having in the true style of chivalry rescued "certayne ladies owt of prison," he finally obtained the king's pardon, and the quiet possession of Whittington Castle.

In the reign of King Henry III. we have mention of Master Ricard, the king's harper, to whom in his thirty-sixth year (1252) that monarch gave not only forty shillings and a pipe of wine, but also a pipe of wine to Beatrice his wife.<sup>6</sup> The title of *Magister*, or Master, given to this minstrel, deserves notice, and shows his respectable situation.

V. The Harper, or Minstrel, who was so necessary an attendant on a royal personage, that Prince Edward (afterwards King Edward I.), in his crusade to the Holy Land, in 1271, was not without his harper, who must have been officially very near his person; as we are told by a contemporary historian,<sup>7</sup> that, in the attempt to assassinate that

---

all his opponents in solemn contest, &c., appears to be burlesqued in the Turnament of Totenham (see vol. i. p. 254), as is well observed by the learned author of *Remarks, &c.*, in *Gent. Mag.* for July, 1794, p. 613.

<sup>5</sup> "John, sun to King Henry, and Fulco felle at varlance at Chestes [r. Chesse]; and John brake Fulco[s] hed with the Chest borde: and then Fulco gave him such a blow, that he had almost killid hym."—*Lel. Coll.* i. p. 264. A curious picture of courtly manners in that age! Notwithstanding this fray, we read in the next paragraph, that "King Henry dubbid Fulco & 3 of his brethrene Knightes at Winchester."—*Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Burney's *Hist.* ii. p. 355.—*Rot. Pip. An.* 36 H. III. "Et in uno dolio vini empto & dato MAGISTRO RICARDO Citharistæ Regis, xl. sol. per br. Reg. Et in uno dolio empto & dato Beatrici uxori ejusdem Ricardi."

<sup>7</sup> Walter Hemmingford (vixit temp. Edw. I.) in *Chronica*, cap. 35, inter V. *Hist. Ang. Scriptores*, vol. II. Oxon. 1687, fol. p. 591.



heroic prince, when he had wrested the poisoned knife out of the Sarazen's hand, and killed him with his own weapon; the attendants, who had stood apart while he was whispering to their master, hearing the struggle, ran to his assistance, and one of them, to wit his harper, seizing a tripod, or trestle, struck the assassin on the head and beat out his brains.<sup>8</sup> And though the prince blamed him for striking the man after he was dead, yet his near access shows the respectable situation of this officer; and his affectionate zeal should have induced Edward to entreat his brethren, the Welsh bards, afterwards with more lenity.

Whatever was the extent of this great monarch's severity towards the professors of music and of song in Wales; whether the executing by martial law such of them as fell into his hands was only during the heat of conflict, or was continued afterwards with more systematic rigour;<sup>9</sup> yet in his own court the minstrels appear to have been highly favoured; for when, in 1306, he conferred the order of knighthood on his son and many others of the young nobility, a multitude of minstrels were introduced to invite and induce the new knights to make some military vow (x). And

Under the succeeding reign of King Edward II. such extensive privileges were claimed by these men, and by dissolute persons assuming their character, that it became a matter of public grievance, and was obliged to be reformed by an express regulation in A.D. 1315 (y). Notwithstanding which, an incident is recorded in the ensuing year, which shows that minstrels still retained the liberty of entering at will into the royal presence, and had something peculiarly splendid in their dress. It is thus related by Stowe (z):

"In the year 1316, Edward the Second did solemnize his feast of Pentecost at Westminster, in the great hall: where sitting royally at the table with his peers about him, there entered a woman *adorned like a Minstrel*, sitting on a great horse trapped, as *Minstrels then used*, who rode round about the tables, shewing pastime; and at length came up to the King's table, and laid before him a letter, and forthwith turning her horse, saluted every one and departed." The subject of this letter was a remonstrance to the king on the favours heaped by him on his minions, to the neglect of his knights and faithful servants.

The privileged character of a minstrel was employed on this occasion, as sure of gaining an easy admittance; and a female the rather deputed to assume it, that, in case of detection, her sex might disarm the king's resentment. This is offered on a supposition that

<sup>8</sup> "Accurrentes ad hac Ministri ejus, qui a longe steterunt, invenerunt eum [scil. Nuntium] in terra mortuum, et apprehendit unus eorum tripodem, scilicet CITHARÉDA SUG, & percussit eum in capite, et effudit cerebrum ejus. Increpavitque eum Edwardus quod hominem mortuum percussisset." Ibid. These *Ministri* must have been upon a very confidential footing, as it appears above in the same chapter, that they had been made acquainted with the contents of the letters which the assassin had delivered to the prince from his master.

<sup>9</sup> See Gray's Ode; and the Hist. of the Gwedir Family in "Miscellanies by the Hon. Daines Barrington," 1781, 4to, p. 386; who in the Laws, &c., of this monarch, could find no instances of severity against the Welsh.—See his Observations on the Statutes, 4to, 4th edit. p. 358.



she was not a real minstrel; for there should seem to have been women of this profession (A A), as well as of the other sex; and no accomplishment is so constantly attributed to females, by our ancient bards, as their singing to, and playing on, the harp (A A 2).

In the fourth year of King Richard II. John of Gaunt erected at Tutbury, in Staffordshire, a Court of Minstrels, similar to that annually kept at Chester (page xxxiii), and which, like a Court-Leet or Court-Baron, had a legal jurisdiction, with full power to receive suit and service from the men of this profession within five neighbouring counties, to enact laws and determine their controversies; and to apprehend and arrest such of them as should refuse to appear at the said court, annually held on the 16th of August. For this they had a charter, by which they were empowered to appoint a King of the Minstrels, with four officers to preside over them (B B). These were every year elected with great ceremony; the whole form of which, as observed in 1680, is described by Dr. Plot:<sup>1</sup> in whose time, however, they appear to have lost their singing talents, and to have confined all their skill to wind and string music.<sup>2</sup>

The minstrels seem to have been in many respects upon the same footing as the heralds; and the King of the Minstrels, like the King-at-Arms, was both here and on the continent an usual officer in the courts of princes. Thus we have in the reign of King Edward I. mention of a King Robert, and others. And in 16 Edward II. is a grant to William de Morlee, "the King's Minstrel, styled *Roy de North*,"<sup>3</sup> of houses which had belonged to another king, John le Boteler (B B 2). Rymer hath also printed a licence granted by King Richard II. in 1387, to John Caumz, the King of *his* Minstrels, to pass the seas, recommending him to the protection and kind treatment of all his subjects and allies.<sup>4</sup>

In the subsequent reign of King Henry IV. we meet with no particulars relating to the Minstrels in England, but we find in the Statute Book a severe law passed against their brethren, the Welsh Bards; whom our ancestors could not distinguish from their own *Rimours*, *Minstralx*; for by these names they describe them (B B 3). This act plainly shows, that far from being extirpated by the rigorous policy of King Edward I., this order of men were still able to alarm the English Government, which attributed to them "many diseases and mischiefs in Wales," and prohibited their meetings and contributions.

When his heroic son, King Henry V., was preparing his great voyage for France, in 1415, an express order was given for his minstrels, fifteen

<sup>1</sup> Hist. of Staffordshire, ch. 10. § 69-76, p. 433, et seqq., of which see extracts in Sir J. Hawkins' Hist. of Music, vol. ii. p. 64; and Dr. Burney's Hist., vol. ii. p. 360, et seqq.

N.B. The barbarous diversion of bull-running was no part of the original institution &c., as is fully proved by the Rev. Dr. Pegge, in *Archæologia*, vol. ii. no. xlii. p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> See the charge given by the steward, at the time of the election, in Plot's Hist. ubi supra; and in Hawkins, p. 57, Burney, p. 363-4.

<sup>3</sup> So among the heralds *Norrey* was anciently styled *Roy d'Armes de North*.—Anstis, li. 300. And the Kings at Arms in general were originally called *Reges Heraldorum* (ibid. p. 302), as these were *Reges Ministrallorum*.

<sup>4</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, tom. vii. p. 555.



in number, to attend him:<sup>5</sup> and eighteen are afterwards mentioned to each of whom he allowed *xiid.* a-day, when that sum must have been of more than ten times the value it is at present.<sup>6</sup> Yet when he entered London in triumph after the battle of Agincourt, he, from a principle of humility, slighted the pageants and verses which were prepared to hail his return; and, as we are told by Holingshed,<sup>7</sup> would not suffer "any Dities to be made and song by Minstrels, of his glorious victorie; for that he would whollie have the praise and thanks altogether given to God" (B B 4). But this did not proceed from any disregard for the professors of music or of song; for at the feast of Pentecost, which he celebrated in 1416, having the Emperor and the Duke of Holland for his guests, he ordered rich gowns for sixteen of his minstrels, of which the particulars are preserved by Rymer.<sup>8</sup> And having before his death orally granted an annuity of 100 shillings to each of his minstrels, the grant was confirmed in the first year of his son King Henry VI., A.D. 1423, and payment ordered out of the Exchequer.<sup>9</sup>

The unfortunate reign of King Henry VI. affords no occurrences respecting our subject; but in his thirty-fourth year, A.D. 1456, we have in Rymer<sup>1</sup> a commission for impressing boys or youths, to supply vacancies by death among the king's minstrels: in which it is expressly directed that they shall be elegant in their limbs, as well as instructed in the minstrel art, wherever they can be found, for the solace of his majesty.

In the following reign, King Edward IV. (in his ninth year, 1469, upon a complaint that certain rude husbandmen and artificers of various trades had assumed the title and livery of the king's minstrels, and under that colour and pretence had collected money in divers parts of the kingdom, and committed other disorders, the king grants to Walter Haliday, *Marshal*, and to seven others his own minstrels, whom he names, a Charter,<sup>2</sup> by which he creates, or rather restores, a Fraternity or perpetual Gild (such as, he understands, the brothers and sisters of the fraternity of Minstrels had in times past), to be governed by a *Marshal*, appointed for life, and by two *Wardens*, to be

<sup>5</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, tom. ix. 255.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid* p. 260.

<sup>7</sup> See his chronicle, sub anno 1415 (p. 1170). He also gives this other instance of the king's great modesty, "that he would not suffer his helmet to be carried with him, and shew'd to the people, that they might behold the dintes and cuttes whiche appeared in the same, of such blowes and stripes as hee received the daye of the battell."—*Ibid*. Vid. T. de Elmham, c. 29. p. 72.

The prohibition against vain and secular songs would probably not include that inserted in our first vol., no. v. (p. 264,) which would be considered as a hymn. The original notes engraven on a plate at p. 263, may be seen reduced and set to score in Mr. Stafford Smith's "Collection of English Songs for three and four voices," and in Dr. Burney's *Hist. of Music*, ii. p. 384.

<sup>8</sup> Tom. ix. 336.

<sup>9</sup> Rymer, tom. x. 287. They are mentioned by name, being *ten* in number; one of them was named *Thomas Chatterton*.

<sup>1</sup> Tom. xi. 375.

<sup>2</sup> See it in Rymer, tom. xi. 642, and in Sir J. Hawkins, vol. iv. p. 366, note. The above Charter is recited in letters patent of King Charles I., 15th July (11 Anno Regni), for a Corporation of Musicians, &c. in Westminster, which may be seen, *ibid*.



chosen annually; who are empowered to admit brothers and sisters into the said Gild, and are authorized to examine the pretensions of all such as affected to exercise the minstrel profession; and to regulate, govern, and punish them throughout the realm (those of Chester excepted). This seems to have some resemblance to the Earl Marshal's court among the Heralds, and is another proof of the great affinity and resemblance which the Minstrels bore to the members of the College of Arms.

It is remarkable that Walter Haliday, whose name occurs as Marshal in the foregoing Charter, had been retained in the service of the two preceding Monarchs, King Henry V.<sup>3</sup> and VI.<sup>4</sup> Nor is this the first time he is mentioned as Marshal of the king's minstrels, for in the third year of this reign, 1464, he had a grant from King Edward of ten marks per annum during life, directed to him with that title.<sup>5</sup>

But besides their Marshal, we have also in this reign mention of a Serjeant of the Minstrels, who upon a particular occasion was able to do his royal master a singular service, wherein his confidential situation and ready access to the king at all hours is very apparent: for "as he [King Edward IV.] was in the north contray in the monneth of Septembre, as he lay in his bedde, one namid Alexander Carlile, that was *Sariaunt of the Mynstrellis*, cam to him in grete hast, and badde hym aryse, for he hadde enemyes cummyng for to take him, the which were within vi. or vii. mylis, of the which tydinges the king gretely marveyld,"<sup>6</sup> &c. This happened in the same year, 1469, wherein the king granted or confirmed the Charter for the Fraternity or Gild above mentioned: yet this Alexander Carlile is not one of the eight minstrels to whom that Charter is directed.<sup>7</sup>

The same Charter was renewed by King Henry VIII. in 1520, to John Gilman, his then Marshal, and to seven others his minstrels:<sup>8</sup> and on the death of Gilman, he granted in 1529 this office of Marshal of his Minstrels to Hugh Wodehouse,<sup>9</sup> whom I take to have borne the office of his Serjeant over them.<sup>1</sup>

VI. In all the establishments of royal and noble households, we find an ample provision made for the Minstrels, and their situation to have been both honourable and lucrative. In proof of this it is sufficient to refer to the Houshold-Book of the Earl of Northumberland, A.D. 1512 (c c). And the rewards they received so frequently recur in ancient writers, that it is unnecessary to crowd the page with them here (c c 2.)

<sup>3</sup> Rymer, ix. 255.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. xl. 375.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. xi. 512.

<sup>6</sup> Here unfortunately ends a curious fragment (an. 9 E. IV.), ad calcem Sprotti Chron. ed. Hearne, Oxon. 1719, 8vo. Vide T. Warton's Hist. ii. p. 134. Note (c).

<sup>7</sup> Rymer, xi. 642.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. xiii. 705.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. tom. xiv. 2, 93.

<sup>1</sup> So I am inclined to understand the term *Serviens noster Hugo Wodehous*, in the original grant. - See Rymer, ubi supra. It is needless to observe that *Serviens* expressed a Sergeant as well as a Servant. If this interpretation of *Serviens* be allowed, it will account for his placing Wodehouse at the head of his Gild, although he had not been one of the eight minstrels who had had the general direction. The Serjeant of his Minstrels, we may presume, was next in dignity to the Marshal, although he had no share in the government of the Gild.



The name of Minstrel seems, however, to have been gradually appropriated to the Musician only, especially in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; yet we occasionally meet with applications of the term in its more enlarged meaning, as including the Singer, if not the Composer, of heroic or popular rhymes.<sup>2</sup>

In the time of King Henry VIII. we find it to have been a common entertainment to hear verses recited, or moral speeches learned for that purpose, by a set of men who got their livelihood by repeating them, and who intruded without ceremony into all companies; not only in taverns, but in the houses of the nobility themselves. This we learn from Erasmus, whose argument led him only to describe a species of these men who *did not sing* their compositions; but the others that *did*, enjoyed, without doubt, the same privileges (D D).

For even long after, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, it was usual "in places of assembly" for the company to be "desirous to heare of old adventures and valiaunces of noble knights in times past, as those of King Arthur and his knights of the round-table, Sir Beveys of Southampton, Guy of Warwicke, and others like," in "short and long meetres, and by breaches or divisions [sc. FITS<sup>3</sup>], to be more commodiously sung to the harpe," as the reader may be informed, by a courtly writer, in 1589.<sup>4</sup> Who himself had "written for pleasure, a little brief Romance or historicall Ditty . . . of the Isle of Great Britaine," in order to contribute to such entertainment. And he subjoins this caution: "Such as have not premonition hereof" (viz. that his poem was written in short metre, &c., to be sung to the harp in such places of assembly) "and consideration of the causes alleged, would peradventure reprove and disgrace every Romance, or short historical ditty, for that they be not written in long meeters or verses Alexandrins," which constituted the prevailing versification among the poets of that age, and which no one now can endure to read.

And that the recital of such romances, sung to the harp, was at that time the delight of the common people, we are told by the same writer,<sup>5</sup> who mentions that "common Rimers" were fond of using rhymes at short distances, "in small and popular Musickes song by these Cantabanqui" [the said common rhymers,] "upon benches and barrels' heads," &c., "or else by blind Harpers, or such like Taverne Minstrels, that give a FIT of mirth for a groat; and their matter being for the most part stories of old time, as the tale of Sir Topas the reportes of Bevis of Southampton, Guy of Warwicke, Adam Bell and Clymme of the Clough, and such other old romances, or historicall rimes," &c.; "also they be used in Carols and Rounds, and such like or lascivious Poemes, which are commonly more commodiously uttered by these Buffons, or Vices, in Playes, then by any other person. Such were the rimes of Skelton (usurping the name of a Poet Laureat),

<sup>2</sup> See below, and Note (G G).

<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. page 368.

<sup>4</sup> Puttenham in his *Arte of English Poesie*, 1589, 4to, p. 33. See the quotation in its proper order in vol. i. page 369.

<sup>5</sup> Puttenham, &c. p. 69. (See vol. II. *ibid.*)



being in deede but a rude railing rimer, and all his doings ridiculous." <sup>6</sup>

But although we find here that the Minstrels had lost much of their dignity, and were sinking into contempt and neglect: yet that they still sustained a character far superior to anything we can conceive at present of the singers of old ballads, I think may be inferred from the following representation.

When Queen Elizabeth was entertained at Killingworth Castle by the Earl of Leicester in 1575, among the many devices and pageants which were contrived for her entertainment, one of the personages introduced was to have been that of an ancient Minstrel; whose appearance and dress are so minutely described by a writer there present,<sup>7</sup> and give us so distinct an idea of the character, that I shall quote the passage at large (EE).

"A Person very meet seemed he for the purpose, of a xlv years old, apparelled partly as he would himself. His cap off; his head seemly rounded Tonsterwise;<sup>8</sup> fair kembered, that with a sponge daintily dipt in a little capon's greace, was finely smoothed, to make it shine like a mallard's wing. His beard smugly shaven; and yet his shirt after the new trink, with ruffs fair starched, sleeked and glistening like a pair of new shoes, marshalled in good order with a setting stick, and strut, that every ruff stood up like a wafer. A side [*i. e.* long] gown of Kendal green, after the freshness of the year now, gathered at the neck with a narrow gorget, fastened afore with a white clasp and a keeper close up to the chin; but easily, for heat to undo when he list. Seemly begirt in a red caddis girdle; from that a pair of capped Sheffield knives hanging a' two sides. Out of his bosom drawn forth a lappet of his napkin,<sup>9</sup> edged with a blue lace, and marked with a true love, a heart, and a D for Damian, for he was but a bachelor yet.

"His gown had side [*i. e.* long] sleeves down to mid-leg, slit from the shoulder to the hand, and lined with white cotton. His doublet-sleeves of black worsted: upon them a pair of poynets,<sup>1</sup> of tawny chamlet laced along the wrist with blue threaden points, a wealt towards the hand of fustian-a-napes. A pair of red neather stocks. A pair of pumps on his feet, with a cross cut at the toes for corns; not new indeed, yet cleanly blackt with soot, and shining as a shoing horn.

"About his neck a red ribband suitable to his girdle. His *harp* in good grace dependent before him. His *wrest*<sup>2</sup> tyed to a green lace and hanging by. Under the gorget of his gown a fair flaggon chain

<sup>6</sup> Puttenham, &c. p. 69.

<sup>7</sup> See a very curious "Letter: whearein, part of the entertainment untoo the Queenz Maiesty, at Killingwoorth Castl, in Warwick Sheer, in this soomerz Progress 1575, is signified," &c. bl. l. 4to, vid. p. 46, & seqq. (Printed in Nichols's *Collection of Queen Elizabeth's Progresses*, &c., in 2 vols, 4to.) We have not followed above the peculiar and affected orthography of this writer, who was named Ro. Laneham, or rather Langham.

<sup>8</sup> I suppose "tonsure-wise," after the manner of the monks.

<sup>9</sup> *i. e.* handkerchief. So in Shakspeare's *Othello*, *passim*.

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps, points.

<sup>2</sup> The key, or screw, with which he tuned his harp.



(pewter<sup>3</sup> for) silver, as a *Squire Minstrel of Middlesex*, that travelled the country this summer season, unto fairs and worshipful mens houses. From his chain hung a scutcheon, with metal and colour, resplendant upon his breast of the ancient arms of Islington."

This minstrel is described as belonging to that village. I suppose such as were retained by noble families wore the arms of their patrons hanging down by a silver chain,<sup>4</sup> as a kind of badge. From the expression of *Squire Minstrel* above, we may conclude there were other inferior orders, as *Yeomen Minstrels*, or the like.

This minstrel, the author tells us a little below, "after three lowly courtesies, cleared his voice with a hem . . . and . . . wiped his lips with the hollow of his hand for 'filing his napkin, tempered a string or two with his *ucrest*, and after a little warbling on his Harp for a prelude, came forth with a solemn song, warranted for story out of King Arthur's acts," &c.—This song the reader will find printed in this work. vol ii. book ii. no. 3.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century this class of men had lost all credit, and were sunk so low in the public opinion, that in the 39th year of Elizabeth,<sup>5</sup> a statute was passed, by which "Minstrels, wandering abroad," were included among "rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars," and were adjudged to be punished as such. This act seems to have put an end to the profession (E E 2).

VII. I cannot conclude the account of the ancient English Minstrels, without remarking that they are most of them represented to have been of the North of England. There is scarce an old historical song or ballad (F F) wherein a minstrel or harper appears, but he is characterized, by way of eminence, to have been "of the North Countrey:"<sup>6</sup> and indeed the prevalence of the northern dialect in such compositions shows that this representation is real.<sup>7</sup> On the other

<sup>3</sup> The reader will remember that this was not a *real* minstrel, but only one personating that character; his ornaments therefore were only such as *outwardly* represented those of a real minstrel.

<sup>4</sup> As the house of Northumberland had anciently three minstrels attending on them in their castles in Yorkshire, so they still retain three in their service in Northumberland, who wear the badge of the family (a silver crescent on the right arm), and are thus distributed, viz.—One for the barony of Prudhoe, and two for the barony of Rothbury. These attend the court-leets and fairs held for the lord, and pay their annual suit and service at Alnwick Castle: their instrument being the ancient Northumberland bag-pipe (very different in form and execution from that of the Scots; being smaller, and blown, not with the breath, but with a small pair of bellows).

This, with many other venerable customs of the ancient Lord Percys, was revived by their illustrious representatives the late Duke and Duchess of Northumberland.

<sup>5</sup> Anno Dom. 1597. Vid. Pult. Stat. p. 1110, 39 Eliz.

<sup>6</sup> See pp. 48, 49, ver. 156, 180, &c.

<sup>7</sup> Giraldus Cambrensis, writing in the reign of King Henry II., mentions a very extraordinary habit or propensity, which then prevailed in the north of England, beyond the Humber, for "symphonious harmony" or singing "in two parts, the one murmuring in the base, and the other warbling in the acute or treble." (I use Dr. Burney's version, vol. ii. p. 108.) This he describes as practised by their very children from the cradle; and he derives it from the Danes (so *Daci* signifies in our old writers) and Norwegians, who long overran and in effect new-peopled the northern parts of England, where alone this manner of singing prevailed—Vide *Cambriæ Descriptio*, cap. 13, and in Burney, *ubi supra*. Giraldus is probably right as to the origin or derivation of this practice, for the Danish and Icelandic Scalds had carried the arts of Poetry and Singing



hand, the scene of the finest Scottish ballads is laid in the south of Scotland, which should seem to have been peculiarly the nursery of Scottish minstrels. In the old song of *Maggy Lawder*, a piper is asked, by way of distinction, "Come ze frae the Border?"<sup>8</sup> The martial spirit constantly kept up and exercised near the frontier of the two kingdoms, as it furnished continual subjects for their songs, so it inspired the inhabitants of the adjacent counties on both sides with the powers of poetry. Besides, as our southern metropolis must have been ever the scene of novelty and refinement, the northern countries, as being most distant, would preserve their ancient manners longest, and of course the old poetry, in which those manners are peculiarly described.

The reader will observe in the more ancient ballads of this collection, a caste of style and measure very different from that of contemporary poets of a higher class; many phrases and idioms, which the minstrels seem to have appropriated to themselves, and a very remarkable licence of varying the accent of words at pleasure, in order to humour the flow of the verse, particularly in the rhymes; as

Countrie	harpèr	battèl	morning
Ladie	singer	damsèl	loving

instead of *countrie*, *lady*, *hàrper*, *singer*, &c. This liberty is but sparingly assumed by the classical poets of the same age, or even by the latter composers of heroical ballads; I mean, by such as professedly wrote for the press. For it is to be observed, that so long as

---

to great perfection at the time the Danish settlements were made in the North. And it will also help to account for the superior skill and fame of our northern minstrels and harpers afterwards, who had preserved and transmitted the arts of their Scaldic ancestors.—See *Northern Antiquities*, vol. i. c. 13, p. 386, and *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*, 1763, 8vo. Compare the original passage in Giraldus, as given by Sir John Hawkins, i. 408, and by Dr. Burney, ii. 108, who are both at a loss to account for this peculiarity, and therefore doubt the fact. The edit of Giraldus, which hath been attacked by some partial and bigoted antiquaries, the reader will find defended in that learned and curious work, "Antiquities of Ireland, by Edward Ledwich, LL.D. &c., of Dublin, 1790," 4to, p. 207, & seqq.

<sup>8</sup> This line being quoted from memory, and given as old Scottish poetry is now usually printed (see Note at the end of the Glossary), would have been readily corrected by the copy published in "Scottish Songs," 1794, 2 vols. 12mo, i. p. 267, thus (though apparently corrupted from the Scottish idiom),

"Live you upo' the Border?"

had not all confidence been destroyed by its being altered in the "Historical Essay" prefixed to that publication (p. cx.) to

"Ye live upo' the Border,"

the better to favour a position, that many of the Pipers "might live upon the border, for the conveniency of attending fairs, &c., in both kingdoms." But whoever is acquainted with that part of England, knows that on the English frontier, rude mountains and barren wastes reach almost across the island, scarcely inhabited by any but solitary shepherds, many of whom durst not venture into the opposite border on account of the ancient feuds and subsequent disputes concerning the Debatable Lands, which separated the boundaries of the two kingdoms, as well as the estates of the two great families of Percy and Douglas, till these disputes were settled, not many years since, by arbitration between the *present* Lord Douglas and the *late* Duke and Duchess of Northumberland.

the minstrels subsisted, they seem never to have designed their rhymes for literary publication, and probably never committed them to writing themselves: what copies are preserved of them were doubtless taken down from their mouths. But as the old Minstrels gradually wore out, a new race of Ballad-writers succeeded, an inferior sort of minor poets, who wrote narrative songs merely for the press. Instances of both may be found in the reign of Elizabeth. The two latest pieces in the genuine strain of the old minstrelsy that I can discover are Nos. iii. and iv. of book iii. in this volume. Lower than these I cannot trace the old mode of writing.

The old minstrel ballads are in the northern dialect, abound with antique words and phrases, are extremely incorrect, and run into the utmost licence of metre; they have also a romantic wildness, and are in the true spirit of chivalry. The other sort are written in exacter measure, have a low or subordinate correctness, sometimes bordering on the insipid, yet often well adapted to the pathetic; these are generally in the southern dialect, exhibit a more modern phraseology, and are commonly descriptive of more modern manners. To be sensible of the difference between them, let the reader compare in this volume No. iii. of book iii. with No. xi. of book ii.

Towards the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign (as is mentioned above) the genuine old minstrelsy seems to have been extinct, and thenceforth the ballads that were produced were wholly of the latter kind, and these came forth in such abundance, that in the reign of James I. they began to be collected into little miscellanies, under the name of Garlands, and at length to be written purposely for such collections (F F 2).

P.S. By way of Postscript, should follow here the discussion of the question whether the term *Minstrels* was applied in English to Singers, and Composers of Songs, &c., or confined to Musicians only. But it is reserved for the concluding note (G G).





## NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

REFERRED TO IN

## THE FOREGOING ESSAY.



(A) *The Minstrels, &c.*] The word *Minstrel* does not appear to have been in use here before the Norman Conquest; whereas it had long before that time been adopted in France.<sup>1</sup> MENESTREL, so early as the eighth century, was a title given to the *Maestro di Capella* of K. Pepin, the father of Charlemagne; and afterwards to the Coryphæus, or leader of any band of musicians. [Vide Burney's *Hist. of Music*, ii. 268.] This term *Menestrel*, *Menestrier*, was thus expressed in Latin, *Ministellus*, *Ministrellus*, *Ministrallus*, *Mene-sterellus*, &c. [Vide Gloss. Du Cange, & Supplem.]

Menage derives the French words above mentioned from *Ministerialis* or *Ministeriarius*, barbarous Latin terms, used in the Middle Ages to express a workman or artificer (still called in Languedoc *Ministral*), as if these men were styled ARTIFICERS or PERFORMERS by way of excellence.—Vide *Diction. Etym.* But the origin of the name is given perhaps more truly by Du Cange: "MINISTELLI . . . . quos vulgo *Menestreux* vel *Menestriers* appellamus, quod minoribus aulæ *Ministris* accenserentur." [Gloss. iv. p. 769.] Accordingly, we are told, the word *Minister* is sometimes used pro *Ministellus* [ibid.], and an instance is produced which I shall insert at large in the next paragraph.

Minstrels sometimes assisted at divine service, as appears from the record of the 9th of Edward IV., quoted above in page xxxvii by which Haliday and others are erected into a perpetual Gild, &c.—See the original in Rymer, xi. 642. By part of this record it is recited to be their duty "to pray (*exorare*: which it is presumed they did by assisting in the chant, and musical accompaniment, &c.) in the King's chapel, and particularly for the departed souls of the King and Queen, when they shall die," &c. The same also appears from the passage in the Supplem. to Du Cange,

<sup>1</sup> The Anglo-Saxon and primary English name for this character was *Gleeman* (see below, Note (1) sect. 1), so that, wherever the term *Minstrel* is in these pages applied to it before the Conquest, it must be understood to be only by anticipation. Another early name for this profession in English was *Jogeler*, or *Jocular*, Lat. *Joculator*. [See p. xxvii, as also note (v 2), and note (q).] To prevent confusion, we have chiefly used the more general word *Minstrel*: which (as the author of the *Observ. on the Statutes* hath suggested to the Editor) might have been originally derived from a diminutive of the Lat. *Minister*: scil. *Ministerellus*, *Ministrellus*.



alluded to above. "MINISTER . . . . pro *Ministellus Jocular*." <sup>2</sup>—*Vetus Ceremoniale MS. B. M. deauratæ Tolos.* "Item, etiam congregabuntur Piscatores, qui debent interesse isto die in processione cum *Ministris* seu *Joculatoribus*: quia ipsi Piscatores tenentur habere isto die *Joculatores*, seu *Mimos*, ob *honorem Crucis*—et vadunt primi ante processionem cum *Ministris* seu *Joculatoribus* semper pulsantibus usque ad Ecclesiam S. Stephani." [Gloss. 773.] This may perhaps account for the clerical appearance of the Minstrels, who seem to have been distinguished by the *Tonsure*, which was one of the inferior marks of the clerical character.<sup>3</sup> Thus Geoffrey of Monmouth, speaking of one who acted the part of a Minstrel, says, "Rasit capillos suos et barbam." (See note K.) Again, a writer in the reign of Elizabeth, describing the habit of an ancient Minstrel, speaks of his head as "rounded Tonster-wise" (which I venture to read *Tonsure-wise*), "his beard smugly shaven."—See above, p. xl.

It must, however, be observed, that notwithstanding such clerical appearance of the Minstrels, and though they might be sometimes countenanced by such of the clergy as were of more relaxed morals, their sportive talents rendered them generally obnoxious to the more rigid ecclesiastics, and to such of the religious orders as were of more severe discipline; whose writings commonly abound with heavy complaints of the great encouragement shown to those men by the princes and nobles, and who can seldom afford them a better name than that of *Scurræ*, *Famelici*, *Nebulones*, &c., of which innumerable instances may be seen in Du Cange. It was even an established order in some of the monasteries, that no Minstrel should ever be suffered to enter the gates.<sup>4</sup>

We have, however, innumerable particulars of the good cheer and great rewards given to the Minstrels in many of the convents, which are collected by T. Warton (i. 91, &c.) and others. But one instance, quoted from Wood's *Hist. Antiq. Univ. Ox.* i. 67 (sub an. 1224), deserves particular mention. Two itinerant priests, on a supposition of their being *Mimi* or *Minstrels*, gained admittance. But the cellarer, sacrist, and others of the brethren, who had hoped to have been entertained by their diverting arts, &c., when they found them to be only two indigent ecclesiastics, who could only administer spiritual consolation, and were consequently disappointed of their mirth, beat them and turned them out of the monastery. (*Ibid.* p. 92.) The passage furnishes an additional

<sup>2</sup> *Ministers* seems to be used for *Minstrels* in the Account of the Inthronization of Abp. Neville (An. 6 Edw. IV.). "Then all the Chaplyns must say grace, and the *Ministers* do sing."—Vide Lelandi Collectanea, by Hearne, vol. vi. p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> It has however been suggested to the Editor by the learned and ingenious author of "Irish Antiquities," 4to, that the ancient *Mimi* among the Romans had their heads and beards shaven, as is shown by Salmasius in *Notis ad Hist. August. Scriptores VI.* Paris, 1620, fol. p. 385. So that this peculiarity had a classical origin, though it afterwards might make the Minstrels sometimes pass for Ecclesiastics, as appears from the instance given below. Dr. Burney tells us that *Histriones* and *Mimi* abounded in France in the time of Charlemagne (ii. 221), so that their profession was handed down in regular succession from the time of the Romans, and therewith some leading distinctions of their habit or appearance; yet with a change in their arts of pleasing, which latterly were most confined to singing and music.

<sup>4</sup> Yet in St. Mary's church at Beverley, one of the columns hath this inscription:—"Thys Pillar made the Mynstrylls:" having its capital decorated with figures of five men in short coats, one of whom holds an instrument resembling a lute.—See Sir J. Hawkins, *Hist.* ii. 298.



proof that a minstrel might, by his dress or appearance, be mistaken for an ecclesiastic.

(B) *The Minstrels use mimicry and action, and other means of diverting, &c.*] It is observable, that our old monkish historians do not use the words *Cantator*, *Citharædus*, *Muscius*, or the like, to express a Minstrel in Latin, so frequently as *Mimus*, *Histrion*, *Joculator*, or some other word that implies gesture. Hence it might be inferred, that the Minstrels set off their songs with all the arts of gesticulation, &c.; or, according to the ingenious hypothesis of Dr. Brown, united the powers of melody, poem, and dance.—See his *History of the Rise of Poetry, &c.*]

But indeed all the old writers describe them as exercising various arts of this kind. Joinville, in his *Life of St. Lewis*, speaks of some Armenian Minstrels, who were very dexterous tumblers and posture-masters. “Avec le Prince vinrent trois Menestriers de la Grande Hyermenie (Armenia) . . . . et avoient trois cors.—Quand ils encommenceoient a corner, vous dissiez que ce sont les voix de cygnes, . . . . et fesoient les plus douces melodies.—Ils fesoient trois merveilleus saus, car on leur mettoit une touaille desous les piez, et tournoient tout debout . . . . Les Deux tournoient les testes arieres,” &c.—See the extract at large, in the Hon. D. Barrington's *Observations on the Anc. Statutes*, 4to, 2d edit. p. 273, omitted in the last impression.

This may also account for that remarkable clause in the press-warrant of Henry VI., “De Ministrallis propter solatium Regis providendis,” by which it is required, that the boys, to be provided “in arte Ministrallatus instructos,” should also be “membris naturalibus elegantes.”—See above page xxxvii. (Observ. on the Anc. Stat. 4th edit. p. 337.)

Although by Minstrel was properly understood, in English, one who sung to the harp, or some other instrument of music, verses composed by himself or others, yet the term was also applied by our old writers to such as professed either music or singing separately, and perhaps to such as practised any of the sportive arts connected with these.<sup>5</sup> Music, however, being the leading idea, was at length peculiarly called Minstrelsy, and the name of Minstrel at last confined to the musician only.

In the French language all these arts were included under the general name of *Menestraudie*, *Menestraudise*, *Jonglerie*, &c. [Med. Lat. *Menestellorum Ars*, *Ars Joculatoria*, &c.]—“On peut comprendre sous le nom de *Jonglerie* tout ce qui appartient aux anciens chansonniers Provençaux, Normands, Picards, &c. Le corps de la Jonglerie étoit formé des *Trouveres*, ou *Troubadours*, qui composoient les chansons, et parmi lesquels il y avoit des *Improvisateurs*, comme on en trouve en *Italie*; des *Chanteurs*, ou *Chanterres*, qui exécutoient ou chantoient ces compositions; des *Conteurs* qui faisoient en vers ou en prose les contes, les recits, les histoires; des *Jougleurs* ou *Menestrels* qui accompagnoient de leurs instruments.—L'art de ces Chantres ou Chansonniers, étoit nommé la Science Gaie, *Gay Saber*.” (Pref. *Anthologie Franç.* 1765, 8vo, p. 17.)—See also the curious Fauchet (*De l' Orig. de la Lang. Fr.* p. 72, c.), “Bien tost apres la division de ce grand empire François en tant de petites royaumes, duches, et comtez, au

<sup>5</sup> Vide infra, note (AA).



lieu des Poetes commencerent a se faire cognoistre les *Trouverres*, et, *Chantres*, *Conteurs*, et *Juglours*: qui sont *Trouveurs*, *Chantres*, *Conteurs*, *Jongleurs*, ou *Jugleurs*, c'est à dire, *Menestriers* chantans avec la viole."

We see, then, that *Jongleur*, *Jugleur* (Lat. *Joculator*, *Juglator*), was a peculiar name appropriated to the Minstrels. "Les *Jongleurs* ne faisoient que chanter les poesies sur leurs instruments. On les appelloit aussi *Menestrels*:" says Fontenelle, in his *Hist. du Théat. Franç.*, prefixed to his Life of Corneille.

(c) *Successors of the ancient Bards.*] That the Minstrels in many respects bore a strong resemblance both to the British Bards and to the Danish Scalds, appear from this, that the old monkish writers express them all, without distinction, by the same names in Latin. Thus Geoffrey of Monmouth, himself a Welshman, speaking of an old pagan British king, who excelled in singing and music so far as to be esteemed by his countrymen the patron deity of the Bards, uses the phrase *Deus Joculatorum*; which is the peculiar name given to the English and French Minstrels.<sup>6</sup> In like manner, William Malmesbury, speaking of a Danish king's assuming the profession of a Scald, expresses it by *Professus Mimum*; which was another name given to the Minstrels in Middle Latinity.<sup>7</sup> Indeed Du Cange, in his Glossary, quotes a writer, who positively asserts that the Minstrels of the Middle Ages were the same with the ancient Bards. I shall give a large extract from this learned glossographer, as he relates many curious particulars concerning the profession and arts of the Minstrels; whom, after the monks, he stigmatizes by the name of *Scurræ*; though he acknowledges their songs often tended to inspire virtue.

"Ministelli, dicti præsertim *Scurræ*, Mimi, Joculatores." . . . "Ejusmodi *Scurrarum* munus erat principes non suis duntaxat ludicris oblectare, sed et eorum aures variis avorum, adeoque ipsorum principum laudibus, non sine *assentatione*, cum cantilenis et musicis instrumentis demulcere . . .

"Interdum etiam virorum insignium et heroum gesta, aut explicata et jocunda narratione commemorabant, aut suavi vocis inflexione, fidibusque decantabant, quo sic dominorum, cæterorumque qui his intererant ludicris, nobilium animos ad *virtutem* capessendam, et summorum virorum imitationem accenderent: quod fuit olim apud Gallos Bardorum ministerium, ut auctor est Tacitus. Neque enim alios à *Ministellis*, veterum Gallorum *Bardos* fuisse pluribus probat Henricus Valesius ad 15 Ammiani. . . . Chronicon Bertrandi Guesclini.

"Qui veut avoir renom des bons et des vaillans  
Il doit aler souvent a la pluie et au champs  
Et estre en la bataille, ainsy que fu Rollans,  
Les Quatre Fils Haimon, et Charlon li plus grans,  
Li dus Lions de Bourges, et Guions de Connans,  
Perceval li Galois, Lancelot, et Iristans,  
Alexandres, Artus, Godfroi li Sachans,  
De quoy cils *Menestriers* font les nobles *ROMANS*."

"Nicolaus de Braia describens solenne convivium, quo post inaugurationem suam procures excepit Lud. VIII. rex Francorum, ait inter ipsius

<sup>6</sup> Vide notes (B) (K) (Q).

<sup>7</sup> Vide note (X).



convivii apparatus, in medium prodiisse Mimum, qui regis laudes ac cytharam decantavit."

Our author then gives the lines at length, which begin thus,

"Dumque fovent genium geniali munere Bacchi,  
Nectare commixto curas removeute Lyæo  
Principis a facie, citharæ celeberrimus arte  
Assurgit Mimus, ars musica quæ m d'coravit.  
Hic ergo chorda resonante subiit ista:  
Inclyte rex regum, probitatis stemmate vernans,  
Quem vigor et virtus extollit in æthera famæ," &c.

The rest may be seen in Du Cange, who thus proceeds, "Mitto reliqua similia, ex quibus omnino patet ejusmodi Mimorum et Ministellorum cantilenas ad virtutem principes excitasse. . . . Id præsertim in pugnae præcinctu, dominis suis occinebant, ut martium ardorem in eorum animis concitarent: cujusmodi cantum *Cantilenam Rollandi* appellat Will. Malmesb. lib. 3.—Aimoinus, lib. 4. de Mirac. S. Bened. c. 37. 'Tanta vero illis securitas . . . ut *Scurram* se precedere facerent, qui musico instrumento res fortiter gestas et priorum bella præcineret, quatenus his acrius incitarentur.'" &c. As the writer was a monk, we shall not wonder at his calling the minstrel *scurram*.

This word *scurra*, or some one similar, is represented in the Glossaries as the proper meaning of *Leccator*, (Fr. *Leccour*,) the ancient term by which the Minstrel appears to be expressed in the grant to Dutton, quoted above in page xxxiii. On this head I shall produce a very curious passage, which is twice quoted in Du Cange's Glossary (sc. ad verb. *Menestellus* et ad verb. *Lecator*).—"Philippus Mouskes in Philip. Aug. fingit Carolum M. Provincie comitatum Scurris et Mimis suis olim donasse, indeque postea tantum in hac regione poetarum munerum excrevisse.

"Quar quant li buens Rois Karlemaigne  
Ot toute mise a son de maine  
Provence, qui mult i rt plentive  
De vins, de bois, d'aigue, derive,  
As LECCOURS as MENESTREUS  
Qui sont auques luxurieux  
Le donna toute et departi."

(D) *The Poet and the Minstrel early with us became two persons.*] The word Scald comprehended both characters among the Danes, nor do I know that they had any peculiar name for either of them separate. But it was not so with the Anglo-Saxons. They called a poet *Sceop*, and *Leoðpyhta*: the last of these comes from *Leoð*, a song; and the former answers to our old word *Maker* (Gr. *Ποιητής*), being derived from *Scippan* or *Sceopan*, *formare, facere, fingere, creare* (Ang. to shape). As for the Minstrel, they distinguished him by the peculiar appellation of *Eligman*, and perhaps by the more simple title of *Heappene*, Harper. [See below, Notes (II) (I)]. This last title, at least, is often given to a Minstrel by our most ancient English rhymists.—See in this work, vol. i. p. 48, &c., vol. ii. book ii. no. 7, &c.

(E) *Minstrels . . . at the houses of the great, &c.*] Du Cange affirms, that in the Middle Ages the courts of princes swarmed so much with this



kind of men, and such large sums were expended in maintaining and rewarding them, that they often drained the royal treasuries: especially, he adds, of such as were delighted with their flatteries ("præsertim qui ejusmodi Ministellorum assentationibus delectabantur.") He then confirms his assertion by several passages out of monastic writers, who sharply inveigh against this extravagance. Of these I shall here select only one or two, which show what kind of rewards were bestowed on these old Songsters.

"Rigordus de Gestis Philippi Aug. ann. 1185. Cum in curiis regum seu aliorum principum, frequens turba Histrionum convenire soleat, ut ab eis *curum, argentum, equos, seu vestes*,<sup>8</sup> quos persæpe mutare consueverunt principes, ab eis extorqueant, verba joculatoria variis adulationibus plena proferre nituntur. Et ut magis placeant, quicquid de ipsis principibus probabiliter fingi potest, videlicet omnes delitias et lepores, et visu dignas urbanitates et cæteras ineptias, trutinantibus buccis in medium eructare non erubescunt. Vidimus quondam quosdam principes, qui *vestes* diu excogitatas, et variis florum picturationibus artificiosè elaboratas, pro quibus forsitan 20 vel 30 marcas argenti consumpserant, vix revolutis septem diebus, *Histrionibus*, ministris diaboli, ad primam vocem dedisse," &c.

The curious reader may find a similar, though at the same time a more candid account, in that most excellent writer, Presid. Fauchet (*Recueil de la Lang. Fr.* p. 73), who says that, like the ancient Greek *Ἀοιδόι*, "Nos Trouverres, ainsi que ceux là, prenans leur subject sur les faits des vaillans (qu'ils appelloient Geste, venant de *Gesta* Latin) alloyent . . . par les cours rejouir les Princes . . . Remportans des grandes recompences des seigneurs, qui bien souvent leur donnoient jusques aux robes qu'ils avoyent vestues: et lesquelles ces Juggleurs ne failloyent de porter aux autres cours, à fin d'inviter les seigneurs a pareille liberalité. Ce qui a duré si longuement qu'il me souvient avoir veu Martin Baraton (ja viel Menestrier d'Orleans), lequel aux festes et nopees batoit un tabourin d'argent, semé des plaques aussi d'argent, gravees des armoiries de ceux a qui il avoit appris a *danser*."—Here we see that a minstrel sometimes performed the function of a dancing-master.

Fontenelle even gives us to understand that these men were often rewarded with favours of a still higher kind. "Les princesses et les plus grandes dames y joignoient souvent leurs faveurs. Elles estoient fort foibles contres les beaux esprits."—*Hist. du Théât.* We are not to wonder, then, that this profession should be followed by men of the first quality, particularly the younger sons and brothers of great houses. "Tel qui par les partages de sa famille n'avoit que la moitié ou le quart d'une vieux chateaux bien seigneurial, alloit quelque temps courir le monde en rimant, et revenoit acquerir le reste de Chateau."—Fontenelle, *Hist. du Théât.* We see, then, that there was no improbable fiction in those ancient songs and romances, which are founded on the story of minstrels being beloved

<sup>8</sup> The Minstrels in France were received with great magnificence in the 14th century. Froissart, describing a Christmas entertainment given by the Comte de Foix, tells us that "there were many Mynstrels, as well of hys own as of straungers, and eache of them dyd their devoyre in their faculties. The same day the Erle of Foix gave to Haraulds and Minstrelles the som of fyve hundred Frankes: and gave to the Duke of Tourayns Mynstreles Gownes of Clothe of Gold furred with Ermyne valued at two hundred Frankes."—B. iii. c. 31, Eng. Trans. Lond. 1525. (Mr. C.)



by kings' daughters, &c., and discovering themselves to be the sons of some sovereign prince, &c.

(F) The honours and rewards lavished upon the Minstrels were not confined to the Continent. Our own countryman, Johannes Sarisburiensis (in the time of Henry II.) declaims no less than the monks abroad, against the extravagant favour shown to these men. "Non enim more nugatorum ejus seculi in *Histriones* et *Mimos*, et hujusmodi monstra hominum, ob famæ redemptionem et dilatationem nominis effunditis opes vestras," &c. [Epist. 247.]<sup>9</sup>

The monks seem to grudge every act of munificence that was not applied to the benefit of themselves and their convents. They therefore bestow great applauses upon the Emperor Henry, who, at his marriage with Agnes of Poictou, in 1044, disappointed the poor Minstrels, and sent them away empty. "Infinitam Histrionum et Jocularum multitudinem sine cibo et muneribus vacuum et mœrentem abire permisit."—Chronic. Vitziburg. For which I doubt not but he was sufficiently stigmatized in the songs and ballads of those times.—Vid. Du Cange, Gloss. tom. iv. p. 771, &c.

(G) *The annals of the Anglo-Saxons are scanty and defective.*] Of the few histories now remaining that were written before the Norman Conquest, almost all are such short and naked sketches and abridgments, giving only a concise and general relation of the more remarkable events, that scarce any of the minute circumstantial particulars are to be found in them; nor do they hardly ever descend to a description of the customs, manners, or domestic economy of their countrymen. The *Saxon Chronicle*, for instance, which is the best of them, and upon some accounts extremely valuable, is almost such an epitome as Lucius Florus and Eutropius have left us of the Roman history. As for Ethelward, his book is judged to be an imperfect translation of the *Saxon Chronicle*;<sup>1</sup> and the *Pseudo-Asser*, or *Chronicle of St. Neot*, is a poor defective performance. How absurd would it be, then, to argue against the existence of customs or facts, from the silence of such scanty records as these! Whoever would carry his researches deep into that period of history, might safely plead the excuse of a learned writer, who had particularly studied the Ante-Norman historians. "Conjecturis (licet nusquam verisimili fundamento) aliquoties indulgemus . . . utpote ab Historicis jejune nimis et indiligenter res nostras tractantibus coacti . . . Nostri . . . nudâ factorum commemoratione plerumque contenti, reliqua omnia, sive ob ipsarum rerum, sive meliorum literarum, sive Historicorum officii ignorantiam, fere intacta prætereunt."—Vide plura in Præfat. ad Ælfr. Vitam à Spelman. Ox. 1678, fol.

(H) *Minstrels and Harpers.*] That the Harp (*Cithara*) was the common musical instrument of the Anglo-Saxons, might be inferred from the very word itself, which is not derived from the British, or any other Celtic language, but of genuine Gothic original, and current among every branch of that people, viz. Ang.-Sax. Heape, Heappa. Iceland, *Harpa*, *aurpa*. Dan. and Belg. *Harpe*. Germ. *Harpfe*, *Harpfa*. Gal. *Harpe*. Span.

<sup>9</sup> Et vide Polieraticon, cap. viii., &c.

<sup>1</sup> Vide Nicholson's Eng. Hist. Lib. &c.



*Harpa*. Ital. *Arpa*. [Vid. Jun. Etym.—Menage Etym, &c.] As also from this, that the word *Heapne* is constantly used, in the Anglo-Saxon versions, to express the Latin words *Cithara*, *Lyra*, and even *Cymbalum*. the word *Psalmus* itself being sometimes translated *Heapn rang*, *Harp Song*. [Gloss. Jun. R. apud Lye Anglo-Sax. Lexic.]

But the fact itself is positively proved by the express testimony of Bede, who tells us that it was usual at festival meetings for this instrument to be handed round, and each of the company to sing to it in his turn.—See his *Hist. Eccles. Anglor.* lib. iv. c. 24, where, speaking of their sacred poet Cædmon, who lived in the times of the Heptarchy (ob. circ. 680), he says:—

“Nihil unquam frivoli et supervacui poematis facere potuit; sed ea tantummodo, quæ ad religionem pertinent, religiosam ejus linguam decabant. Siquidem in habitu sæculari, usque ad tempora provectoris ætatis constitutus, nil Carminum aliquando didicerat. Unde nonnunquam in convivio, cum esset lætitiæ causa decretum ut omnes per ordinem *cantare* deberent, ille ubi appropinquare sibi *citharam* cernebat, surgebat à mediâ cænâ, et egressus, ad suam domum repedebat.”

I shall now subjoin King Alfred's own Anglo-Saxon translation of this passage, with a literal interlineary English version.

“He . . næfne noht leaunga. ne weleþ leoðeþ pýncean ne mihte.  
He . . never no leasings, nor idle songs compose ne might;  
ac efne ða an ða ðe to æferynne belumpon. ⁊ his ða  
but lo! only those things which to religion [piety] belong, and his then  
æferytan tunġan ġeðafenode řingān: Mær he ře man in peopolt-  
pious tongue became to sing: He was the [a] man in worldly  
hæde ġeřeted oð ða tīde ðe he pær of ġelyfeþne ylþe  
[secular] state set to the time in which he was of an advanced age;  
⁊ he næfne ænig leop ġeleopnōde. ⁊ he řoppon oft in ġebeorncipe  
and he never any song learned. And he therefore oft in an entertain-  
ðonne ðær pær blīře intīnġa ġeðemeð þ ħi  
ment, when there was for merriment-sake adjudged [or decreed] that they  
ealle řceolþan ðuph enoebýrþneře be heappan řingān. ðonne  
ALL should through their turns by [to the] HARP SING; when  
he ġeřeah ða heappan him nealæcan. ðonne aþar he řop řceome řnam  
he saw the HARP him approach, then arose he FOR SHAME from  
ðam řymle. ⁊ ham eode to ħis ħuse.”  
the supper, and home yode [went] to his house.

Bed. *Hist. Eccl.* à Smith, Cantab. 1722, fol. p. 597.

In this version of Alfred's it is observable, (1) that he has expressed the Latin word *cantare* by the Anglo-Saxon words “be heappan řingān,” *sing to the harp*, as if they were synonymous, or as if his countrymen had no idea of singing unaccompanied with the harp: (2) that when Bede simply says, *surgebat a mediâ cænâ*, he assigns a motive, “aþar řop řceome,” *arose for shame*: that is, either from an austerity of manners, or from his being deficient in an accomplishment which so generally prevailed among his countrymen.



(1) *The word Glee, which peculiarly denoted their art, &c.]* This word *Glee* is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *Glǣg* [Gligg], *Musica*, *Music*, *Minstrelsy* (Somn.). This is the common radix, whence arises such a variety of terms and phrases relating to the minstrel art, as affords the strongest internal proof, that this profession was extremely common and popular here before the Norman Conquest. Thus we have

I.

(1) *Glǣp* [Gliw], *Mimus*, a Minstrel.

*Glǣgman*, *glǣgmon*, *glǣman*, [Glee-man?], *Histrion*, *Mimus*, *Pantomimus*; all common names in Middle Latinity for a Minstrel: and Somner accordingly renders the original by a *Minstrel*, a *Player on a Timbrel or Taber*. He adds, a *Fidler*, but although the *Fythel* or *Fiddle* was an ancient instrument, by which the *Jogelar* or Minstrel sometimes accompanied his song (see Warton, i. 17), it is probable that Somner annexes here only a modern sense to the word, not having at all investigated the subject.

*Glumen*, *glugmen* [Glee-men]. *Histriones*, Minstrels. Hence

*Glǣgmanna-yppe*. *Orchestra* vel *Pulpitus*. The place where the Minstrels exhibited their performances.

(2) But their most proper and expressive name was

*Glǣphleopmen*. *Musicus*, a *Minstrel*; and

*Glǣphleopmenlica*. *Musicus*, Musical.

These two words include the full idea of the minstrel character, expressing at once their music and singing, being compounded of *Glǣp*, *Musicus*, *Mimus*, a Musician, Minstrel, and *Leod*, *Carmen*, a Song.

(3) From the above word *Glǣg*, the profession itself was called

*Glǣgcræft* [Glig- or Glee-craft]. *Musica*, *Histrionia*, *Mimica*, *Gesticulatio*: which Somner rightly gives in English, *Minstrelsy*, *Mimical Gesticulation*, *Mummery*. He also adds, *Stage-playing*; but here again I think he substitutes an idea too modern, induced by the word *Histrionia*, which in Middle Latinity only signifies the minstrel art.

However, it should seem that both mimical gesticulation and a kind of rude exhibition of characters were sometimes attempted by the old minstrels: but

<sup>2</sup> *Gleeman* continued to be the name given to a Minstrel both in England and Scotland almost as long as this order of men continued.

In De Brunne's metrical version of Bishop Grossthead's *Manuel de Peche*, A.D. 1303 (see Warton, i. 61), we have this,

“ — Gode men, ye shall lere  
When ye any *Gleman* here.”

Fabyan (in his Chronicle, 1533, f. 32) translating the passage from Geoffrey of Monmouth, quoted below in p. lxxix, note (κ), renders *Deus Joculatorum*, by God of *Gleemen*.—Warton's *Hist. Eng. Poet.* Diss. 1. Fabyan died in 1592.

Dunbar, who lived in the same century, describing, in one of his poems, entitled “*The Daunce*,” what passed in the infernal regions “amangis the Feynóis,” says,

“ Na Menstralls playit to thame, but dowl  
For *Gle-men* thaire wer haldin out,  
Be day and eke by nycht.”

See Poems from Bannatyne's MS. Edinb. 1770, 12mo, p. 30.  
Maitland's MS. at Cambridge reads here, *Glewe men*.



(4) As musical performance was the leading idea, so  
 Gliopian, *Cantus musicos edere*; and  
 Gliḡbeam, ḡlipbeam [Gliḡ- or Glee-beam]. *Tympanum*: a **Ṭimbrel** or  
**Ṭaber**. (So Somn.) Hence  
 Glypian. *Tympanum pulsare*; and  
 Gliḡ-meden: Gliḡpiende-maden [Glee-maiden]. *Tympanistria*: which  
 Somner renders a **She-Minstrel**; for it should seem that they had  
 females of this profession: one name for which was also Gliḡbydenertna.  
 (5) Of congenial derivation to the foregoing, is  
 Glypc [Glywc]. *Tibia*, a Pipe or Flute.  
 Both this and the common radix Gliḡḡ, are with great appearance of truth  
 derived by Junius from the Icelandic **Gliḡgur**, *Flatus*: as supposing the  
 first attempts at music among our Gothic ancestors, were from wind-  
 instruments.—Vide Jun. *Etym.* Ang. V. Glee.

## II.

But the Minstrels, as is hinted above, did not confine themselves to the  
 mere exercise of their primary arts of music and song, but occasionally  
 used many other modes of diverting. Hence, from the above root was  
 derived, in a secondary sense,

- (1) Gleo, and pinḡum ḡlip. *Facetiæ*.  
 Gleopian, *jocari*; **to jest, or be merry**: (Somn.) and  
 Gleopieno, *jocans*; **jesting, speaking merrily**: (Somn.)  
 Gliḡman also signified *Jocista*, a Jester.  
 Gliḡ-gamen [Glee-games], *joci*. Which Somner renders **Merriments**,  
 or **merry Jests**, or **Tricks**, or **Sports**; **Gamboles**.
- (2) Hence, again, by a common metonymy of the cause for the effect,  
 Gliē, *gaudium, alacritas, lætitia, facetiæ*; **Joy, Mirth, Gladness**,  
**Cheerfulness, Glee** [Somner]. Which last application of the word still  
 continues, though rather in a low debasing sense.

## III.

But however agreeable and delightful the various arts of the Minstrels  
 might be to the Anglo-Saxon laity, there is reason to believe that, before  
 the Norman Conquest at least, they were not much favoured by the clergy,  
 particularly by those of monastic profession. For, not to mention that  
 the sportive talents of these men would be considered by those austere  
 ecclesiastics as tending to levity and licentiousness, the Pagan origin of  
 their art would excite in the monks an insuperable prejudice against it.  
 The Anglo-Saxon Harpers and Gleemen were the immediate successors and  
 imitators of the Scandinavian Scalds, who were the great promoters of  
 Pagan superstition, and fomented that spirit of cruelty and outrage in  
 their countrymen, the Danes, which fell with such peculiar severity on the  
 religious and their convents. Hence arose a third application of words  
 derived from Gliḡḡ, Minstrelsy, in a very unfavourable sense, and this  
 chiefly prevails in books of religion and ecclesiastic discipline. Thus

- (1) Gliḡ, is *Ludibrium, laughing to scorn*.<sup>3</sup> So in S. Basil. Regui. 11.

<sup>3</sup> To *gleek*, is used in Shakspeare for 'to make sport, to jest,' &c.



Hl hæfðon him to ȝlize halpenne mineȝunge. *Ludibrio habebant salutarem ejus admonitionem* (10). This sense of the word was perhaps not ill-founded; for as the sport of rude uncultivated minds often arises from ridicule, it is not improbable but the old Minstrels often indulged a vein of this sort, and that of no very delicate kind. So again,

Gliz-man was also used to signify *Scurra*, a **saucy Jester**. (Somn.)

Gliz-georn. *Dicax, Scurriles jocos supra quam par est amans.* Officium Episcopale, 3.

Glizian. *Scurrilibus oblectamentis indulgere: Scurram agere.* Canon. Edgar, 58.

(2) Again, as the various attempts to please, practised by an order of men who owed their support to the public favour, might be considered by those grave censors as mean and debasing: Hence came from the same root,

Glipen. *Parasitus, Assentator; a Fawner, a Cogger, a Parasite, a Flatterer.*<sup>4</sup> (Somn.)

#### IV.

To return to the Anglo-Saxon word *Gliz*; notwithstanding the various secondary senses in which this word (as we have seen above) was so early applied: yet

The derivative *Glee* (though now chiefly used to express merriment and joy) long retained its first simple meaning, and is even applied by Chaucer to signify *music and minstrelsy*.—Vide Jun. Etym. e. g.

“For though that the best harper upon live  
Would on the beste sound jolly harpe  
That evir was, with all his fingers five  
Touch aie o string, or aie o warble harpe,  
Were his nailes poincted n-e-vir so sharpe  
It shoulde makin every wight to dull  
To heare is GLEE, and of his strokes ful.”

—*Troyl.* lib. ii. 1030.

Junius interprets *Glees* by *Musica Instrumenta*, in the following passages of Chaucer's Third Boke of *FAME*:—

“ . . . Stoden . . . the castell all aboutin  
Of all manner of *Mynstroles*  
And *Jestours* that tellen tales  
Both of wepyng and of game,  
And of all that longeth unto fame;  
There herde I play on a harpe  
That sowned both well and sharpe  
Hym Orpheus full craftily;  
And on this syde fast by

<sup>4</sup> The preceding list of Anglo-Saxon words, so full and copious beyond anything that ever yet appeared in print on this subject, was extracted from Mr. Lye's curious Anglo-Saxon Lexicon, in MS., but the arrangement here is the Editor's own. It had, however, received the sanction of Mr. Lye's approbation, and would doubtless have been received into his printed copy, had he lived to publish it himself.

It should also be observed, for the sake of future researches, that without the assistance of the old English interpretations given by Somner, in his Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, the Editor of this book never could have discovered that *Glee* signified *Minstrelsy*, or *Glizman* a *Minstrel*.

Sate the harper Orion;  
 And Eacides Chirion;  
 And other harpers many one,  
 And the Briton Glaskyrion."

After mentioning these, the great masters of the art, he proceeds:

"And small Harpers with her *Glees*  
 Sat under them in divers sees."

\* \* \* \* \*

Again, a little below, the poet having enumerated the performers on all the different sorts of instruments, adds,

"There sawe I syt in other sees  
 Playing upon other sundry *Glees*,  
 Which that I cannot neven<sup>5</sup>  
 More than starres ben in heven," &c.

Upon the above lines I shall only make a few observations:

(1) That by *Jestours*, I suppose we are to understand *Gestours*; scil. the relaters of Gestes (Lat. *Gesta*), or stories of adventures both comic and tragical, whether true or feigned; I am inclined to add, whether in prose or verse. [Compare the record below, in marginal note subjoined to (v 2).] Of the stories in prose, I conceive we have specimens in that singular book the *Gesta Romanorum*, and this will account for its seemingly improper title. These were evidently what the French called *Conteours*, or Story Tellers, and to them we are probably indebted for the first prose Romances of chivalry; which may be considered as specimens of their manner.

(2) That the "Briton Glaskyrion," whoever he was, is apparently the same person with our famous harper Glasgerion, of whom the reader will find a tragical ballad in vol. ii. no. vii. b. ii. In that song may be seen an instance of what was advanced above in note (E), of the dignity of the minstrel profession, or at least of the artifice with which the minstrels endeavoured to set off its importance.

Thus "a king's son is represented as appearing in the character of a harper or minstrel in the court of another king. He wears a collar (or gold chain) as a person of illustrious rank, rides on horseback, and is admitted to the embraces of a king's daughter."

The Minstrels lost no opportunity of doing honour to their art.

(3) As for the word *Glees*, it is to this day used in a musical sense, and applied to a peculiar piece of composition. Who has not seen the advertisements proposing a reward to him who should produce the best Catch, Canon, or Glee?

(K) Comes from the pen of Geoffrey of Monmouth.] Geoffrey's own words are, "Cum ergo alterius modi aditum [Boldulphus] non haberet, rasisit capillos suos et barbam,<sup>6</sup> cultumque *Joculatoris* cum Cythara fecit.

<sup>5</sup> Neven, i. e. name.

<sup>6</sup> Geoffrey of Monmouth is probably here describing the appearance of the *Joculatores* or Minstrels, as it was in his own time. For they apparently derived this part of their dress, &c., from the *Mimi* of the ancient Romans, who had their heads and beards shaven (see above, p. xlvi. note<sup>3</sup>): as they likewise did the mimicry, and other arts of diverting, which they superadded to the composing and singing to the harp heroic



Deinde intra castra deambulans, modulis quos in Lyra componebat, sese *Cytharistam* exhibebat."—Galf. Monum. Hist. 4to, 1508, lib. vii. c. 1. That *Joculator* signifies precisely a Minstrel, appears not only from this passage, where it is used as a word of like import to *Citharista*, or Harper (which was the old English word for Minstrel), but also from another passage of the same author, where it is applied as equivalent to *Cantor*.—See lib. i. cap. 22, where, speaking of an ancient (perhaps fabulous) British king, he says, "Hic omnes Cantores quos præcedens ætas habuerat et in modulis et in omnibus musicis instrumentis excedebat; ita ut Deus Joculatorum videretur." Whatever credit is due to Geoffrey as a relater of facts, he is certainly as good authority as any for the signification of words.

(L) *Two remarkable facts.*] Both of these facts are recorded by William of Malmesbury; and the first of them, relating to Alfred, by Ingulphus also. Now Ingulphus (afterwards Abbot of Croyland) was near forty years of age at the time of the Conquest,<sup>7</sup> and consequently was as proper a judge of the Saxon manners as if he had actually written his history before that event; he is therefore to be considered as an Ante-Norman writer; so that, whether the fact concerning Alfred be true or not, we are assured from his testimony, that the *Joculator* or Minstrel was a common character among the Anglo-Saxons. The same also may be inferred from the relation of William of Malmesbury, who outlived Ingulphus but thirty-three years.<sup>8</sup> Both these writers had doubtless recourse to innumerable records and authentic memorials of the Anglo-Saxon times which never descended down to us; their testimony therefore is too positive and full to be overturned by the mere silence of the two or three slight Anglo-Saxon epitomes that are now remaining.—Vide note (G).

As for Asser Menevensis, who has given a somewhat more particular detail of Alfred's actions, and yet takes no notice of the following story, it will not be difficult to account for his silence, if we consider that he was a rigid monk, and that the Minstrels, however acceptable to the laity, were never much respected by men of the more strict monastic profession, especially before the Norman Conquest, when they would be considered as brethren of the Pagan Scalds.<sup>9</sup> Asser therefore might not regard Alfred's skill in Minstrelsy in a very favourable light; and might be induced to drop the circumstance related below, as reflecting, in his opinion, no great honour on his patron.

---

songs, &c., which they inherited from their own progenitors the Bards and Scalds of the ancient Celtic and Gothic nations. The Longobardi had, like other Northern people, brought these with them into Italy. For in the year 774, when Charlemagne entered Italy and found his passage impeded, he was met by a minstrel of Lombardy, whose song promised him success and victory. "Contigit Joculatorem ex Longobardorum gente ad Carolum venire, et *Cantunculam a se compositam*, rotando in conspectu suorum cantare."—Tom. ii. p. 2, Chron. Monast. Noval. lib. iii. cap. x. p. 717. (T. Warton's Hist. vol. ii. Emend. of vol. i. p. 113.)

<sup>7</sup> Natus 1030, scripsit 1091, obiit 1109.—Tanner.

<sup>8</sup> Obiit anno 1142.—Tanner.

<sup>9</sup> (See above, p. liv.) Both Ingulph. and Will. of Malmesb. had been very conversant among the Normans, who appear not to have had such prejudices against the Minstrels as the Anglo-Saxons had.



The learned editor of Alfred's Life in Latin, after having examined the scene of action in person, and weighed all the circumstances of the event, determines, from the whole collective evidence, that Alfred could never have gained the victory he did, if he had not with his own eyes previously seen the disposition of the enemy by such a stratagem as is here described. —Vide Annot. in *Ælfr. Mag. Vitam*, p. 33. Oxon. 1678, fol.

(M) *Alfred . . . assumed the dress and character of a Minstrel.*] “*Fingens se Joculatorum, assumpta cithara,*” &c.—Ingulphi Hist. p. 869. “*Sub specie Mimi . . . ut Jocu'atoris professor artis.*”—Gul. Malmesb. l. ii. c. iv. p. 43. That both *Joculator* and *Mimus* signify literally a *Minstrel*, see proved in notes (B) (K) (N) (Q) &c. See also note (G G).

Malmesbury adds, “*Unius tantum fidelissimi fruebatur conscientia.*” As this confidant does not appear to have assumed the disguise of a Minstrel himself, I conclude that he only appeared as the Minstrel's attendant. Now that the Minstrel had sometimes his servant or attendant to carry his harp, and even to sing to his music, we have many instances in the old metrical Romances, and even some in this present collection.—See vol. i. b. i. Song vi.; vol. ii. b. ii. Song vii., &c. Among the French and Provençal bards, the *Trouverre*, or Inventor, was generally attended with his singer, who sometimes also played on the harp, or other musical instrument. “*Quelque fois durant le repas d'un prince on voyoit arriver un Trouverre inconnu avec ses Menestrels ou Jongleurs, et il leur faisoit chanter sur leurs harpes ou vielles les vers qu'il avoit composés. Ceux qui faisoient les SONS aussi bien que les MORS étoient les plus estimés.*”—Fontenelle, *Hist. du Théâtre*.

That Alfred excelled in music is positively asserted by Bale, who doubtless had it from some ancient MS., many of which subsisted in his time that are now lost: as also by Sir J. Spelman, who, we may conclude, had good authority for this anecdote, as he is known to have compiled his life of Alfred from authentic materials collected by his learned father: this writer informs us that Alfred “provided himself of musitians, not common, or such as knew but the practick part, but men skilful in the art itself, whose skill and service he yet further improved with his own instruction,” p. 199. This proves Alfred at least to have understood the theory of music; and how could this have been acquired without practising on some instrument? which we have seen above, note (H), was so extremely common with the Anglo-Saxons, even in much ruder times, that Alfred himself plainly tells us, it was *shameful* to be ignorant of it. And this commonness might be one reason why Asser did not think it of consequence enough to be particularly mentioned in his short life of that great monarch. This rigid monk may also have esteemed it a slight and frivolous accomplishment, savouring only of worldly vanity. He has, however, particularly recorded Alfred's fondness for the oral Anglo-Saxon poems and songs [“*Saxonica poemata die nocteque . . . audiens . . . memoriter retinebat,*” p. 16. “*Carmina Saxonica memoriter discere,*” &c. p. 43, et ib.]. Now the poems learnt by rote, among all ancient unpolished nations, are ever songs chanted by the reciter, and accompanied with instrumental melody.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thus *Lied*, the Saxon word for a Poem, is properly a Song, and its derivative *Lied*



(N) *With his harp in his hand, and dressed like a Minstrel.*] “Assumpta manu citharâ . . . professus Mimum, qui hujusmodi arte stipem quotidianam mercaretur . . . Jussus abire pretium Cantus accepit.”—Malmest. l. ii. c. 6. We see here that which was rewarded was (*not* any mimicry or tricks, but) his singing (*Cantus*); this proves, beyond dispute, what was the nature of the entertainment Aulaff afforded them. Perhaps it is needless by this time to prove to the reader that *Mimus*, in Middle Latinity, signifies a Minstrel, and *Mimia*, Minstrelsy, or the Minstrel-art. Should he doubt it, let him cast his eye over the two following extracts from Du Cange:—

“MIMUS: Musicus, qui instrumentis musicis canit. Leges Palatinæ Jacobi II. Reg. Majoric. In domibus principum, ut tradit antiquitas, Mimi seu Joculatores licitè possunt esse. Nam illorum officium tribuit lætitiâ . . . Quapropter volumus et ordinamus, quod in nostra curia Mimi debeant esse quinque, quorum duo sint tubicinatores, et tertius sit tabelerius [*i. e.* a player on the tabor<sup>2</sup>]. Lit. remiss. ann. 1374. Ad Mimos cornicitantes, seu bucinantes accesserunt.”

“MIMIA, Ludus Mimicus, Instrumentum [potius, Ars Joculatoria]. Ann. 1482 . . . *mimia* et cantu victum acquiro.”—Du Cange, Gloss. tom. iv. 1762. Supp. c. 1225.

(O) *To have been a Dane.*] The northern historians produce such instances of the great respect shown to the Danish Scalds in the courts of our Anglo-Saxon kings, on account of their musical and poetic talents (notwithstanding they were of so hateful a nation), that if a similar order of men had not existed here before, we cannot doubt but the profession would have been taken up by such of the natives as had a genius for poetry and music.

“Extant Rhythmi hoc ipso [Islandico] idiomate Angliæ, Hybernique Regibus oblatis et liberaliter compensati, &c. Itaque hinc colligi potest linguam Danicam in aulis vicinorum regum principumque familiarem

---

signifies a Ballad to this day in the German tongue: and *Cantare*, we have seen above, is by Alfred himself rendered *Be heappan rîngan*.

<sup>2</sup> The *Tabour* or *Tabourin* was a common instrument with the French Minstrels, as it had also been with the Anglo-Saxon (*vide* p. lii): thus in an ancient Fr. MS. in the Harl. Collection (2253, 75) a Minstrel is described as riding on horseback and bearing his tabour:

“Entour son col porta son *Tabour*,  
Depeynt de Or, e riche Açour.”

—See also a passage in Menage's *Diction. Etym.* [v. MENESTRIERS], where *Tabours* is used as synonymous to *Menestriers*.

Another frequent instrument with them was the *Viele*. This, I am told, is the name of an instrument at this day, which differs from a guitar, in that the player turns round a handle at the top of the instrument, and with his other hand plays on some keys that touch the chords and produce the sound.

See Dr. Burney's account of the *Vielle*, vol. ii. p. 263, who thinks it the same with the *Role*, or wheel. See p. 270 in the note.

“Il ot un Jogleor a Sens,  
Qui navoit pas sovent robe entiere;  
Sovent estoit sans sa *Viele*.”—

*Fabliaux et Cont.* ii. 184, 185.



fuisse, non secus ac hodie in aulis principum peregrina idiomata in deliciis haberi cernimus. Imprimis Vita Egilli Skallagrimii id invicto argumento adstruit. Quippe qui interrogatus ab Adalsteino, Angliæ rege, quomodo manus Eirici Blodoxii, Northumbriæ regis, postquam in ejus potestatem venerat, evasisset, cujus filium propinquosque occiderat, . . rei statim ordinem metro, nunc satis obscuro, exposuit, nequaquam ita narraturus non intelligenti."—Vide plura apud Torfæii Prefat. ad Orcad. Hist. fol.

This same Egill was no less distinguished for his valour and skill as a soldier, than for his poetic and singing talents as a Scald; and he was such a favourite with our king Athelstan, that he at one time presented him with "duobus annulis et scriniis, duobus bene magnis argento repletis. . . . Quinetiam hoc addidit, ut Egillus quidvis præterea a se petens, obtineret; bona mobilia, sive immobilia, præbendam vel præfecturas. Egillus porro regiam munificentiam gratus excipiens, Carmen Encomiasticon, à se linguâ Norvegicâ (quæ tum his regnis communis) compositum, regi dicat; ac pro eo, duas marcas auri puri (pondus marcæ . . 8 uncias æquabat) honorarii loco retulit."—Arngr. Jon. Rer. Islandic. lib. ii. p. 129.

See more of Egill, in the "Five Pieces of Runic Poetry," p. 45, whose poem (there translated) is the most ancient piece all in rhyme that is, I conceive, now to be found in any European language, except Latin.—See Egill's Islandic original, printed at the end of the English version in the said Five Pieces, &c.

(P) *If the Saxons had not been accustomed to have Minstrels of their own . . . and to show favour and respect to the Danish Scalds,*] if this had not been the case, we may be assured, at least, that the stories given in the text could never have been recorded by writers who lived so near the Anglo-Saxon times as Malmesbury and Ingulphus, who, though they might be deceived as to particular facts, could not be so as to the general manners and customs which prevailed so near their own times among their ancestors.

(Q) *In Domesday Book, &c.*] Extract. ex Libro Domesday: et vide Anstis Ord. Gart. ii. 304.

#### Gloucestershire.

Fol. 162. Col. 1. *Berdic Joculator Regis habet iii villas, et ibi v. car. nil redd.*

That *Joculator* is properly a Minstrel, might be inferred from the two foregoing passages of Geoffrey of Monmouth (v. note K), where the word is used as equivalent to *Citharista* in one place, and to *Cantor* in the other: this union forms the precise idea of the character.

But more positive proofs have already been offered, vide supra, pp. xlvii, xlvi, lviii, lxvi, note.—See also Du Cange's Gloss. vol. iii. c. 1543. "JOGULATOR pro *Joculator*. Consilium Masil. an. 1381. Nullus Ministres, Jogulator, audeat pinsare vel sonare instrumentum cujuscunque generis," &c., &c.

As the Minstrel was termed in French *Jongleur* and *Jugleur*, so he was



called in Spanish *Jutglar* and *Juglar*. “Tenemos canciones y versos para recitar mui antiguos y memorias ciertas de los *Juglares*, que assistian en los banquetes, como los que pinta Homero.”—Prolog. a las Comed. de Cervantes, 1749, 4to.

“El anno 1328, en las siestas de la Coronacion del Rey, Don Alonso el IV. de Aragon, . . . <sup>3</sup> el *Juglar Ramaset* cantò una Villanesca de la Composicion del . . . infante [Don Pedro]: y otro Juglar, llamado Novellet, recitò y representò en voz y sin cantar mas de 600 versos, que hizo el Infante en el metro que llamaban Rima Vulgar.”—Ibid.

“Los Trobadores inventaron la Gaya Ciencia . . . estos Trobadores eran casi todos de la primera Nobleza.—Es verdad, quem ya entonces se havian entrometido entre las diversiones Cortesanos, los Cantadores, los Cantores, los *Juglares*, los Truanes, y los Bufones.”—Ibid.

In England, the King's Juglar continued to have an establishment in the royal household down to the reign of Henry VIII. [Vide note (c c).] But in what sense the title was there applied does not appear. In Barklay's *Egloges*, written circ. 1514, Juglars and Pipers are mentioned together. Egl. iv.—Vide T. Warton's Hist. ii. 254.

(R) *A valiant warrior, named Taillefer, &c.*] See Du Cange, who produces this as an instance,—“Quod Ministellorum munus interdum præstabant milites probatissimi. Le Roman De Vacce, MS.

“Quant il virent Normanz venir  
Mout veissiez Engleiz fremir . . .  
Taillefer qui mout bien chantoit,  
Sur un cheval, qui tost alloit,  
Devant euls aloit chantant  
De Kallemaigne et de Roullant,  
Et d'Olivier de Vassaux,  
Qui moururent en Rainschevaux.”

“Qui quidem Taillefer a Gulielmo obtinuit ut primus in hostes irrueret, inter quos fortiter dimicando occubuit.”—Gloss. tom. iv. 769, 770, 771.

“Les anciennes chroniques nous apprennent, qu'en premier rang de l'Armée Normande, un écuyer nommé Taillefer, monté sur un cheval armé, chanta la *Chanson de Roland*, qui fut si long tems dans les bouches des Francois, sans qu'il soit resté le moindre fragment. Le Taillefer après avoir entonné la chanson que les soldats répetoient, se jetta le premier parmi les Anglois, et fut tué.”—Voltaire, Add. Hist. Univ. p. 69.

The reader will see an attempt to restore the *Chanson de Roland*, with musical notes, in Dr. Burney's Hist. ii. p. 276.—See more concerning the *Song of Roland*, vol. ii. p. 88, note.

(S) *An eminent French writer, &c.*] “M. l'Evêque de la Ravalière, qui avoit fait beaucoup de recherches sur nos anciennes Chansons, prétend que c'est à la Normandie que nous devons nos premiers Chansonniers, non à la Provence, et qu'il y avoit parmi nous des Chansons en langue vulgaire

<sup>3</sup> “Romanset Jutglar canta alt veus . . . devant lo senyor Rey.”—*Chron. d' Aragon*, apud Du Cange. iv. 771.



avant celles de Provençaux, mais postérieurement au Règne de Phillippe I., ou à l'an 1100." [v. Révolutions de la Langue François, à la suite des *Poesies du Roi de Navarre.*] "Ce seroit une antériorité de plus d'une demi siècle à l'époque des premiers troubadours, que leur historien Jean de Nostredame fixe à l'an 1162," &c.—Pref. à *l'Anthologie Franç.*, 8vo, 1765.

This subject hath since been taken up and prosecuted at length in the Prefaces, &c., to M. Le Grand's "Fabliaux ou Contes du xii<sup>e</sup> et du xiii<sup>e</sup> Siecle, Paris, 1788." 5 tom. 12mo, who seems pretty clearly to have established the priority and superior excellence of the old Rimeurs of the north of France over the Troubadours of Provence, &c.

(s 2) *Their own native Gleemen or Minstrels must be allowed to exist.*] Of this we have proof positive in the old metrical Romance of *Horn-Child* (vol. ii. no. 1, p. 95), which although from the mention of Sarazens, &c., it must have been written at least after the first Crusade in 1096, yet, from its Anglo-Saxon language or idiom, can scarce be dated later than within a century after the Conquest. This, as appears from its very exordium, was intended to be sung to a popular audience, whether it was composed by, or for, a Gleeman or Minstrel. But it carries all the internal marks of being the production of such a composer. It appears of genuine English growth; for after a careful examination, I cannot discover any allusion to French or Norman customs, manners, composition, or phraseology; no quotation "as the Romance sayth:" not a name or local reference which was likely to occur to a French Rimeur. The proper names are all of Northern extraction. Child *Horn* is the son of *Allof* (i. e. Olaf or Olave), king of *Sudenne* (I suppose Sweden), by his queen *Godylde* or *Godylt*. *Athulf* and *Fykenyld* are the names of subjects. *Eylmer* or *Aylmere* is king of *Westnesse* (a part of Ireland), *Rymenyld* is his daughter; as *Erminyld* is of another king *Thurstan*; whose sons are *Athyld* and *Beryld*. *Athelbrus* is steward of King *Aylmer*, &c., &c. All these savour only of a Northern origin, and the whole piece is exactly such a performance as one would expect from a Gleeman or Minstrel of the north of England, who had derived his art and his ideas from his Scaldic predecessors there. So that this probably is the original from which was translated the old French fragment of *Dan Horn*, in the Harleian MS. 527, mentioned by Tyrwhitt (Chaucer iv. p. 68), and by T. Warton (Hist. i. 38), whose extract from *Horn-Child* is extremely incorrect.

Compare the style of *Horn-Child* with the Anglo-Saxon specimens in short verses and rhyme, which are assigned to the century succeeding the Conquest, in Hicke's *Thesaurus*, tom. i. cap. 24, pp. 224 and 231.

(T) *The different production of the sedentary composer and the rambling minstrel.*] Among the old metrical romances, a very few are addressed to readers, or mention reading; these appear to have been composed by writers at their desk, and exhibit marks of more elaborate structure and invention. Such is *Eglamour of Artas* (vol. ii. no. 20, p. 100), of which I find in a MS. copy in the Cotton Library, A. 2, fol. 103, the Second Fitt thus concludes,

" . . . thus ferr have I red."



Such is *Ipomydon* (vol. ii. no. 23, p. 101), of which one of the divisions (Sign. E. ii. b. in pr. copy) ends thus,

"Let hym go, God him spede  
Tyll este-soone we of him reed [i. e. read]."

So in *Amys and Amylion*<sup>4</sup> (vol. ii. no. 31, p. 102), in stanza 3rd we have

"In Geste as we rede,"

and similar phrases occur in stanzas 34, 125, 140, 196, &c.

These are all studied compositions, in which the story is invented with more skill and ingenuity, and the style and colouring are of superior cast to such as can with sufficient probability be attributed to the minstrels themselves.

Of this class I conceive the romance of *Horn-Child* (mentioned in the last note (s 2) and in vol. ii. no. 1, p. 95), which, from the naked unadorned simplicity of the story, I would attribute to such an origin.

But more evidently is such the *Squire of Lowe Degree* (vol. ii. no. 24, p. 101), in which is no reference to any French original, nothing like the phrase, which so frequently occurs in others, "as the Romance sayth,"<sup>5</sup> or the like. And it is just such a rambling performance as one would expect from an itinerant bard. And

Such also is *A lyttel Geste of Robyn Hode*, &c., in 8 Fyttes, of which are extant two editions, 4to, in black-letter, described more fully in page 57 of this volume.—This is not only of undoubted English growth, but, from the constant satire aimed at abbots and their convents, &c., could not possibly have been composed by any monk in his cell.

Other instances might be produced; but especially of the former kind is *Syr Launfal* (vol. ii. no. 11, p. 98), the 121st stanza of which has

"In Romances as we rede."

<sup>4</sup> It ought to have been observed in its proper place in vol. ii. no. 31, page 102, that *Amys and Amylion* were no otherwise "Brothers," than as being fast friends: as was suggested by the learned Dr. Samuel Pegge, who was so obliging as to favour the Essayist formerly with a curious transcript of this poem, accompanied with valuable illustrations, &c.; and that it was his opinion, that both the fragment of the *Lady Bellesent*, mentioned in the same no. 31, and also the mutilated Tale, no. 37 (page 103), were only imperfect copies of the above romance of *Amys and Amylion*, which contains the two lines quoted in no. 37.

<sup>5</sup> Wherever the word *Romance* occurs in these metrical narratives, it hath been thought to afford decisive proof of a translation from the *Romance* or French language. Accordingly it is so urged by T. Warton (i. 146, note), from two passages in the pr. copy of *Sir Eglamour*, viz. sign E 1,

"In Romaunce as we rede."

Again in fol. ult.

"In Romaunce this cronycle is."

But in the Cotton MS. of the original, the first passage is

"As I herd a Clerke rede."

And the other thus,

"In Rome this Gest cronycled ys."

So that I believe references to "the Romaunce," or the like, were often mere expletive phrases inserted by the oral Reciters; one of whom I conceive had altered or corrupted the old *Syr Eglamour* in the manner that the copy was printed.



This is one of the best invented stories of that kind, and I believe the only one in which is inserted the name of the author.

(T 2) *Royer or Raherus, the King's Minstrel.*] He is recorded by Leland under both these names, in his *Collectanea*, scil. vol. i., p. 61.

"Hospitale S. Bartholomæi in West Smithfelde in London. Royer Mimis Regis fundator."

"Hosp. Sti. Barthol. Londini.

"Raherus Mimis Regis H. 1. primus fundator, an. 1102, 3 H. 1, qui fundavit etiam Priorat. Sti. Barthol."—*Ibid.* p. 99.

That *Mimus* is properly a Minstrel in the sense affixed to the word in this Essay, one extract from the accounts [Lat. *Computis*] of the priory of Maxtock, near Coventry, in 1441, will sufficiently show.—Scil. "Dat. Sex. Mimis Dni. Clynton cantantibus, citharisantibus, ludentibus," &c. iiis. (T. Warton, ii. 106, note q.) The same year the Prior gave to a *doctor prædicans*, for a sermon preached to them, only 6d.

In the *Monasticon*, tom. ii. pp. 166, 167, is a curious history of the founder of this priory, and the cause of its erection, which seems exactly such a composition as one of those which were manufactured by Dr. Stone, the famous legend-maker, in 1380 (see T. Warton's curious account of him in vol. ii. p. 190, note), who required no materials to assist him in composing his Narratives, &c.; for in this legend are no particulars given of the founder, but a recital of miraculous visions exciting him to this pious work, of its having been before revealed to King Edward the Confessor, and predicted by three Grecians, &c. Even his minstrel profession is not mentioned, whether from ignorance or design, as the profession was perhaps falling into discredit when this legend was written. There is only a general indistinct account that he frequented royal and noble houses, where he ingratiated himself *suavitate joculari*. (This last is the only word that seems to have any appropriated meaning.) This will account for the indistinct incoherent account given by Stow. "Rahere, a pleasant-witted gentleman, and therefore in his time called the King's Minstrel."—*Survey of Lond.* Ed. 1598, p. 308.

(U) *In the early times, every Harper was expected to sing.*] See on this subject King Alfred's Version of Cædmon, above in note (H), p. li.

So in *Horn-Child*, King Allof orders his steward Athelbrus to

"—teche him of harpe and of song."

In the *Squire of Lowe Degree*, the King offers to his daughter,

"Ye shall have harpe, sautry,\* and song."

And Chaucer, in his description of the Limitour, or Mendicant Friar, speaks of harping as inseparable from singing (i. p. 11, ver. 268),

"—in his harping, whan that he hadde songe."

\* The Harp (Lat. *Cithara*) differed from the Sautry, or Psaltry (Lat. *Psalterium*), in that the former was a stringed instrument, and the latter was mounted with wire: there was also some difference in the construction of the bellies, &c. See "*Bartholomæus de proprietatibus rerum*," as Englished by Trevisa and Batman, ed 1584, in Sir J. Hawkins' Hist. ii. p. 285.



(U 2) *As the most accomplished, &c.*] See Hoveden, p. 102, in the following passage, which had erroneously been applied to King Richard himself, till Mr. Tyrwhitt (Chaucer, iv. page 62) showed it to belong to his Chancellor. "Hic ad augmentum et famam sui nominis, emendicata carmina, et rhythmos adulatorios comparabat; et de regno Francorum Cantores et Joculatores muneribus allexerat, ut de illo canerent in plateis: et jam dicebatur ubique, quod non erat talis in orbe."—For other particulars relating to this Chancellor, see T. Warton's Hist. vol. ii. Addit. to p. 113 of vol. i.

(U 3) *Both the Norman and English languages would be heard at the houses of the great.*] A remarkable proof of this is, that the most diligent inquirers after ancient English rhymes, find the earliest they can discover in the mouths of the Norman nobles. Such as that of Robert, Earl of Leicester and his Flemings in 1173, temp. Hen. II. (little more than a century after the Conquest) recorded by Lambarde in his Dictionary of England, p. 36.

"Hoppe Wyliken, hoppe Wyliken,  
Ingland is thine and myne."

And that noted boast of Hugh Bigot, Earl of Norfolk, in the same reign of King Henry II., vide Camdeni Britannia (art. Suffolk), 1607, folio:

"Were I in my castle of Bungey  
Vpon the riuer of Waueney  
I would ne care for the king of Cockeney."

Indeed many of our old metrical romances, whether originally English, or translated from the French to be sung to an English audience, are addressed to persons of high rank, as appears from their beginning thus,—*"Listen, Lordings,"* and the like. These were prior to the time of Chaucer, as appears from vol. ii. p. 98, et seqq. And yet to his time our Norman nobles are supposed to have adhered to their French language.

(v) *That intercommunity, &c., between the French and English Minstrels, &c.*] This might, perhaps, in a great measure, be referred even to the Norman Conquest, when the victors brought with them all their original opinions and fables; which could not fail to be adopted by the English Minstrels and others, who solicited their favour. This interchange, &c., between the Minstrels of the two nations, would be afterwards promoted by the great intercourse produced among all the nations of Christendom in the general crusades, and by that spirit of chivalry which led Knights and their attendants, the Heralds and Minstrels, &c., to ramble about continually, from one court to another, in order to be present at solemn tournaments and other feats of arms.

(v 2) *Is not the only instance, &c.*] The constant admission granted to Minstrels was so established a privilege, that it became a ready expedient to writers of fiction. Thus, in the old romance of *Horn-Child*, the Princess Rymenyld being confined in an inaccessible castle, the prince, her lover, and some assistant knights, with concealed arms, assume the minstrel



character; and approaching the castle with their "Gleyinge" or Minstrelsy, are heard by the lord of it, who being informed they were "narpeirs. jogelers, and fythelers," has them admitted, when

"Horn sette him abenche [i. e. on a bench]  
Is [i. e. his] harpe he gan clenche  
He made Rymenild a lay."

This sets the princess a-weeping, and leads to the catastrophe; for he immediately advances to "the Borde" or table, kills the ravisher, and releases the lady.

(v 3) . . assumed the dress and character of a Harper, &c.] We have this curious *Historiette* in the records of Lacock Nunnery, in Wiltshire, which had been founded by this Countess of Salisbury.—See Vincent's *Discovery of Errors in Brooke's Catalogue of Nobility, &c.*, folio, pp. 445, 446, &c. Take the following extract (and see Dugdale's *Baron.* i. p. 175):

"Ela uxor Gulielmi Longespee primi, nata fuit apud Ambresbiraim, patre et matre Normannis.

"Pater itaque ejus defectus senio migravit ad Christum, A.D. 1196. Mater ejus ante biennium obiit. . . . . Interea Domina charissima clam per cognatos adducta fuit in Normanniam, et ibidem sub tutâ et arctâ custodiâ nutrita. Eodem tempore in Angliâ fuit quidam miles nomine Gulielmus Talbot, qui induit se habitum Peregrini [Anglice, *A Pilgrim*] in Normanniam transfretavit et moratus per duos annos, huc atque illuc vagans, ad explorandam dominam Elam Sarum. Et illâ inventâ, exuit habitum Peregrini, et induit se quasi Cytharisator et Curiam ubi morabatur intravit. Et ut erat homo Jocosus, in Gestis Antiquorum valde peritus, ibidem gratanter fuit acceptus quasi familiaris. Et quando tempus aptum invenit, in Angliam repatriavit, habens secum istam venerabilem dominam Elam et hæredem comitatus Sarum; et eam Regi Richardo præsentavit. Ac ille lætissime eam suscepit, et Fratri suo Guillelmo Longespee maritalavit . . . .

"A.D. 1226, Dominus Guill. Longespee primus nonas Martii obiit. Ela vero uxor ejus 7 annis supervixit. . . . . Una die DUO monasteria fundavit primo mane xvi. Kal. Maii, A.D. 1232, apud Lacock, in quo sanctæ degunt Canonissæ. . . . Et Henton post nonam, anno vero ætatis suæ xlv." &c.

(w) For the preceding account, Dugdale refers to *Monast. Angl.* i. [r. ii.] p. 185, but gives it as enlarged by D. Powel, in his *Hist. of*

<sup>1</sup> JOGELER (Lat. *Joculator*) was a very ancient name for a Minstrel. Of what nature the performance of the *Joculator* was, we may learn from the Register of St. Swithin's Priory at Winchester (T. Warton, i. 69). "Et cantabat JOULATOR quidam nomine Herebertus Canticum *Colbromdi*, necnon *Gestum Emme* regine a judicio ignis liberate, in aula Prioris." His instrument was sometimes the FYTHELE, or Fiddle, Lat. *Fidicula*: which occurs in the Anglo-Saxon Lexicon. On this subject we have a curious passage from a MS. of the Lives of the Saints in metre, supposed to be earlier than the year 1200 (T. Warton's *Hist.* i. p. 17), viz.

"Christofre him served longe  
The kynge loved melodye nuon of fithle and of nge:  
So that his Jogeler on a day beforen him gon to pl. ye faste,  
And in a tyme he lemped in his song the cervi at laste."



Cambria, p. 196, who is known to have followed ancient Welsh MSS. The words in the Monasticon are,—“Qui accersitis *Sutoribus* Cestriæ et *Histrionibus*, festinanter cum exercitu suo venit domino suo facere succursum Walenses vero videntes multitudinem magnam venientem, relictâ obsidione fugerunt. . . . Et propter hoc dedit Comes antedictus . . . Constabulario dominationem Sutorum et Histrionum. Constabularius vero retinuit sibi et hæredibus suis dominationem Sutorum: et Histrionum dedit vero Seneschallo.” (So the passage should apparently be pointed; but either *et* or *vero* seems redundant.)

We shall see below, in note (z), the proper import of the word *Histriones*: but it is very remarkable that this is not the word used in the grant of the Constable De Lacy to Dutton, but “Magisterium omnium *Leccatorum* et *Meretricium* totius Cestreshire, sicut liberius illum [sic] Magisterium teneo de Comite” (vid. Blount’s *Ancient Tenures*, p. 156). Now, as under this grant the heirs of Dutton confessedly held for many ages a *magisterial* jurisdiction over all the Minstrels and Musicians of that county, and as it could not be conveyed by the word *Meretrices*, the natural inference is that the Minstrels were expressed by the term *Leccatores*. It is true, Du Cange, compiling his Glossary, could only find in the writers he consulted this word used in the abusive sense, often applied to every synonyme of the sportive and dissolute Minstrel, viz. *Scurra*, *vaniloquus*, *parasitus epulo*, &c. (This I conceive to be the proper arrangement of these explanations, which only express the character given to the minstrel elsewhere: see Du Cange *passim*, and notes (C) (E) (F) (I), vol. iii. 2, &c.) But he quotes an ancient MS. in French metre, wherein the *Leccour* (Lat. *Leccator*) and the Minstrel are joined together, as receiving from Charlemagne a grant of the territory of Provence, and from whom the Provençal Troubadours were derived, &c.—See the passage above in note (C), p. xlviii.

The exception in favour of the family of Dutton is thus expressed in the Statute, Anno 39 Eliz. chap. iv. entitled, “An Act for punishment of Rogues, Vagabonds, and Sturdy Beggars.”

“§ II . . . All Fencers, Bearwards, Common Players of Enterludes, and *Minstrels*, wandering abroad (other than Players of Enterludes belonging to any Baron of this Realm, or any other honourable Personage of greater degree, to be authorised to play under the hand and seal of arms of such Baron or Personage): all Juglers, Tinkers, Pedlers, &c. . . . shall be adjudged and deemed Rogues, Vagabonds, and Sturdy Beggars, &c.

“§ X. Provided always, that this Act, or any thing therein contained, or any authority thereby given, shall not in any wise extend to disinherit, prejudice, or hinder, John Dutton, of Dutton, in the county of Chester, Esquire, his heirs or assigns, for, touching or concerning any liberty, preheminance, authority, jurisdiction, or inheritance, which the said John Dutton now lawfully useth, or hath, or lawfully may or ought to use within the County-Palatine of Chester, and the County of the City of Chester, or either of them, by reason of any ancient Charters of any Kings of this Land, or by reason of any prescription, usage, or title whatsoever.”

The same clauses are renewed in the last Act on this subject, passed in the reign of Geo. III.



(X) *Edward I. . . . at the knighting of his son, &c.]* See Nic. Trivetii *Annales*, Oxon. 1719, 8vo., p. 342.

"In festo Pentecostes Rex filium suum armis militaribus cinxit, et cum eo Comites Warenniæ et Arundeliæ, aliosque, quorum numerus ducentos et quadraginta dicitur excessisse. Eodem die cum sedisset Rex *Ministrellorum Multitudi*, portantium multiplici ornatu amictum, ut milites præcipue novos invitarent, et inducerent, ad vovendum factum armorum aliquod coram signo."

(Y) *By an express regulation, &c.]* See in Hearne's *Append. ad Lelandi Collectan.* vol. vi. p. 36, "A Dietarie, Writtes published after the Ordinance of Earles and Barons, Anno Dom. 1315."

"Edward, by the grace of God, &c., to Sheriffes, &c., greetynge. Forasmuch as . . . many idle persons, under colour of Mynstrelsie, and going in messages, and other faigned busines, have ben and yet be receaved in other mens houses to meate and drynke, and be not therewith contented yf they be not largely consydered with gyftes of the Lordes of the houses, &c. . . . WE wylling to restrayne such outrageous enterprises and idleness, &c., have ordeyned . . . that to the houses of Prelates, Earles, and Barons, none resort to meate and drynke, unlesse he be a Mynstrel, and of these Minstrels that there come none, except it be three or four Minstrels of Honour at the most in one day, unlesse he be desired of the Lorde of the House. And to the houses of meaner men that none come unlesse he be desired, and that such as shall come so, holde themselves contented with meate and drynke, and with such curtesie as the Maister of the House wyl shewe unto them of his owne good wyll, without their askyng of any thyng. And yf any one do agaynst this Ordinaunce, at the first tyme he to lose his Minstrelsie, and at the second tyme to forswear his craft, and never to be receaved for a Minstrel in any house. . . . Yeven at Langley the vi. day of August, in the ix. yere of our reigne."

These abuses arose again to as great a height as ever in little more than a century after, in consequence, I suppose, of the licentiousness that crept in during the civil wars of York and Lancaster. This appears from the Charter 9 E. IV., referred to in page xxxvii. "Ex querulosâ insinuatione . . . Ministrallorum nostrorum accepimus qualiter nonnulli rudes agricolæ et artifices diversarum misterarum regni nostri Angliæ, finxerunt se fore Ministrallos, quorum aliqui Liberatam nostram eis minime datam portant, seipsos etiam fingentes esse *Minstrallos nostros proprios*, cujus quidem Liberatæ ac dictæ artis sive occupationis Ministrallorum colore, in diversis partibus regni nostri prædicti grandes pecuniarum exactiones de ligeis nostris deceptivè colligunt," &c.

Abuses of this kind prevailed much later in Wales, as appears from the famous Commission issued out in 9 Eliz. (1567), for bestowing the SILVER HARP on the best Minstrel, Rythmer, or Bard, in the principality of North Wales; of which a fuller account will be given below in note (B B 3).

(Z) *It is thus related by Stow.]* See his *Survey of London, &c.*, fol. 1633, p. 521. [Acc. of Westm. Hall.] Stow had this passage from Walsingham's *Hist Ang.* . . . "Intravit quædam mulier ornata *Histrion-*



anli habitu, equum bonum insidens Histrionaliter phaleratum, quæ mensas more Histrium circumvit; et tandem ad Regis mensam per gradus ascendit, et quandam literam coram rege posuit, et retracto freno (salutatis ubique discumbentibus) prout venerat ita recessit," &c.—Anglic. Norm. Script. &c., Franc., 1603 fol. p. 109.

It may be observed here, that Minstrels and others often rode on horse-back up to the royal table, when the kings were feasting in their great halls.—See in this vol. p. 49, &c.

The answer of the porters (when they were afterwards blamed for admitting her) also deserves attention: "Non esse moris domus regię *Histriones* ab ingressu quomodolibet prohibere," &c. Walsingh.

That Stow rightly translated the Latin word *Histrion* here by *Minstrel*, meaning a musician that sung, and whose subjects were stories of chivalry, admits of easy proof; for in the *Gesta Romanorum*, chap. cxi., Mercury is represented as coming to Argus in the character of a Minstrel; when he "*incepit, more Histrionico, fabulas dicere, et plerumque cantare.*"—T. Warton, iii. p. li. And Muratori cites a passage in an old Italian chronicle, wherein mention is made of a stage erected at Milan:—"Super quo *Histriones cantabant*, sicut modo cantatur de Rolando et Oliverio."—*Antich. Ital.* ii. p. 6. (Observ. on the Statutes, 4th Edit. p. 362.)

See also notes (E), page xlix, &c., and (F), p. li, &c.

(A A) *There should seem to have been women of this profession.*] This may be inferred from the variety of names appropriated to them in the Middle Ages, viz. Anglo-Sax. *Glipmeden* [Gleemaiden], &c., *glypiendemaeden*, *glypbydeneytpe* (vide supra, p. liii), Fr. *Jengleresse*, Med. Lat. *Joculatrix*, *Ministrallissa*, *Fæmina Ministerialis*, &c.—Vide Du Cange, Gloss. and Suppl.

See what is said in page xxxvii concerning the "Sisters of the fraternity of Minstrels;" see also a passage quoted by Dr. Burney (ii. 315) from Muratori, of the Chorus of women singing through the streets accompanied with musical instruments, in 1268.

Had the female described by Walsingham been a *Tombestere*, or Dancing-woman (see Tyrwhitt's Chaucer, iv. 307, and v. Gloss.), that historian would probably have used the word *Saltatrix*.—See T. Warton, i. 240, note m.

These *Saltatrices* were prohibited from exhibiting in churches and church-yards along with *Joculatores*, *Histriones*, with whom they were sometimes classed, especially by the rigid ecclesiastics, who censured, in the severest terms, all these sportive characters.—Vide T. Warton, in loco citato. et vide supra notes (E) (F), &c.

And here I would observe, that although Fauchet and other subsequent writers affect to arrange the several members of the minstrel profession under the different classes of *Troverces* (or *Troubadours*), *Chanterres*, *Conteurs*, and *Jugleurs*, &c. (vide page xlvii), as if they were distinct and separate orders of men, clearly distinguished from each other by these appropriate terms, we find no sufficient grounds for this in the oldest writers; but the general names in Latin, *Histrion*, *Mimus*, *Joculator*, *Ministrallus*, &c.; in French, *Menestrier*, *Menestrel*, *Jongleur*, *Jugleur*, &c.; and in English, *Jogleur*, *Jugler*, *Minstrel*, and the like, seem to be given



them indiscriminately. And one or other of these names seems to have been sometimes applied to every species of men whose business it was to entertain or divert (*joculari*), whether with poesy, singing, music, or gesticulation, singly, or with a mixture of all these. Yet as all men of this sort were considered as belonging to one class, order, or community (many of the above arts being sometimes exercised by the same person), they had all of them doubtless the same privileges, and it equally throws light upon the general history of the profession, to show what favour or encouragement was given, at any particular period of time, to any one branch of it. I have not, therefore, thought it needful to inquire, whether, in the various passages quoted in these pages, the word *Minstrel*, &c., is always to be understood in its exact and proper meaning of a Singer to the Harp, &c.

That men of very different arts and talents were included under the common name of *Minstrels*, &c., appears from a variety of authorities. Thus we have *Menestrels de Trompes*, and *Menestrels de Bouche*, in the *Suppl. to Du Cange*, c. 1227, and it appears still more evident from an old French Rhymer, whom I shall quote at large.

"Les Quens<sup>8</sup> manda les *Menestrels* ;  
Et si a fet<sup>9</sup> crier entre els,  
Qui la meillor truffe<sup>1</sup> sauroit  
Dire, ne faire, qu'il auroit  
Sa robe d'escarlade nueve.  
L'uns Menestrels a l'autre reuve  
Fere son mestier, tel qu'il sot,  
Li uns fet l'yvre, l'autre sot ;  
Li uns chante, li autre note ;  
Et li autres dit la riote ;  
Et li autres la jenglerie ;<sup>2</sup>  
Cil qui sevent de jonglerie  
Viennent par devant le Conte ;  
Aucuns ja qui fabliaus conte  
Il i ot did mainte risée," &c.—

*Fabliaux et Contes*, 12110, tom. ii. p. 161.

And what species of entertainment was afforded by the ancient *Jugleurs*, we learn from the following citation from an old Romance, written in 1230 :—

"Quand les tables ostees furent  
C'il *juggleurs* in pies esturent  
S'ont vielles, et harpes prisees  
Chansons, sons, vers, et reprises  
Et *gestes* chanté nos ont."

Sir J. Hawkins, ii. 44, from Andr. Du Chene.—See also Tyrwhitt's *Chaucer*, iv. p. 299.

All the before-mentioned sports went by the general name of *Ministralcia*, *Ministellorum*, *Ludicra*, &c.—"Charta an. 1377, apud Rymer, vii. p. 160. 'Peracto autem prandio, ascendebat D. Rex in cameram suam cum Prælati, Magnatibus, et Proceribus, prædictis: et deinceps Magnates, Milites, et Domini, alii que Generosi diem illum, usque ad tempus cenæ, in

<sup>8</sup> Le Compte.

<sup>9</sup> Fait.

<sup>1</sup> Sornette [a gibe, a jest, or flouting].

<sup>2</sup> Janglerie, babillage, raillerie.



*tripudiis, coreis, et solempnibus Ministralcüs, præ gaudio solempnitatis illius continuarunt.*”—Du Cange, Gloss. 773. [This was at the Coronation of King Richard II.]

It was common for the Minstrels to dance, as well as to harp and sing (see above, note (E), p. xlix). Thus in the old romance of *Tirante el Blanco*; Val. 1511, the 14th cap. lib. ii. begins thus, “Despues que las Mesas fueron alçadas vinieron los Ministriles; y delante del Rey, y de la Reyna dançaron un rato: y despues truxeron colacion.”

They also, probably, among their other feats, played tricks of sleight of hand: hence the word *Jugler* came to signify a performer of Legerdemain: and it was sometimes used in this sense (to which it is now appropriated) even so early as the time of Chaucer, who, in his *Squire's Tale* (ii. 108), speaks of the horse of brass, as

“————— like  
An apparence ymade by som magike,  
As JOGELOURS plaïen at thise festes grete.”

See also the *Frere's Tale*, l. p. 279, v. 7049.

(A A 2) *Females playing on the Harp.*] Thus in the old romance of *Syr Degore* (or *Degree*, vol. ii. no. 22, p. 100), we have [Sign. D. i.],

“The lady, that was so faire and bright,  
Upon her bed she sate down ryght;  
She harped notes swete and fine.  
[Her mayds filled a pice of wine.]  
And Syr Degore sate him downe,  
For to hear the harpes sowne.”

The fourth line being omitted in the pr. copy, is supplied from the folio MS.

In the *Squyr of Lowe Degree* (vol ii. no. 24, p. 101), the king says to his daughter [Sign. D. i.],

“Ye were wont to harpe and syng.  
And be the meryest in chamber comyng.”

In the *Carle of Carlisle* (vol. ii. no. 10, p. 98), we have the following passage. [Folio MS. p. 451, v. 217.]

“Downe came a lady faire and free,  
And sett her on the Carles knee:  
One whiles shee harped, another whiles song,  
Both of paramours and louinge amonge.”

And in the romance of *Eger and Grime* (vol ii. no. 12, p. 99), we have [ibid. p. 127, col. 2], in part i. ver. 263,

“The ladye fayre of hew and hyde  
Shee sate downe by the bed side,  
Shee laid a souter [psaltry] vpon her knee,  
Thereon shee plaid tull lovesomelye.  
. . . And her 2 maydens sweetlye sange.”

A similar passage occurs in part iv. ver. 129 (page 136). But these instances are sufficient.

(B B) *A Charter . . . . . to appoint a King of the Minstrels.*] Entitled *Carta Le Roy de Ministraultx* (in Latin, *Histriones*, vide Plott, p. 437). A copy of this charter is printed in *Monast. Anglic.* i. 355 and in *Blount's Law Diction.* 1717 (art. *King*).

That this was a most respectable officer, both here and on the Continent, will appear from the passages quoted below, and therefore it could only have been in modern times, when the proper meaning of the original terms *Ministraultz*, and *Histriones*, was forgot, that he was called *King of the Fiddlers*; on which subject see below, note (E E 2).

Concerning the *King of the Minstrels* we have the following curious passages collected by Du Cange, Gloss iv. 773.

"*Rex Ministellorum*; supremus inter *Ministellos*: de cujus munere, potestate in cæteros *Ministellos* agit Charta Henrici IV. Regis Angliæ in *Monast. Anglicano*, tom. i. pag. 355.—Charta originalis an. 1338. Je Robert Caveron Roy des Menestreuls du Royaume de France. Aliæ ann. 1357 et 1362. Copin de Brequin Roy des Menestres du Royaume de France. Computum de auxiliis pro redemptione Regis Johannis, ann. 1367. Pour une Couronne d' Argent qu'il donna le jour de la Tiphaine au Roy des Menestrels.

"*Regestum Magnorum Dierum Trecensium* an. 1296. Super quod Joannes dictus Charmillons Juglator, cui Dominus Rex per suas literas tanquam *Regem Juglatorum* in civitate Trecensi Magisterium Juglatorum, quemadmodum suæ placeret voluntati, concesserat."—Gloss. c. 1587.

There is a very curious passage in Pasquier's *Recherches de la France*, Paris, 1633, folio, liv. 7, ch. v. p. 611, wherein he appears to be at a loss how to account for the title of *Le Roy*, assumed by the old composers of metrical romances: in one of which the author expressly declares himself to have been a *Minstrel*. The solution of the difficulty, that he had been *Le Roy des Menestrels*, will be esteemed more probable than what Pasquier here advances; for I have never seen the title of *Prince* given to a *Minstrel*, &c. scil. "A nos vieux Poetes . . . . comme . . fust qu'ils eussent certain jeu de prix en leurs Poesies, ils . . . . honoroient du nome, tantot de *Roy*, tantot de *Prince*, celuy qui avoit le mieux faict comme nous voyons entre les Archers, Arbalestiers, et Harquebusiers estre fait le semblable. Ainsi l'Autheur du Roman d'Oger le Danois s'appelle Roy.

"Icy endroict est cil Livre finez  
Qui des enfans Oger est appelez  
Or vueille Diex qu'il soit parachevez  
En tel maniere kestre n'en pulst blamez  
Le Roy Adams [r. Ardenes] ki il'est reinez."

"Et en celuy de Cleomades,

"Ce Livre de Cleomades  
Rimé-j le Roy Adenes  
Menestre au bon Duc Henry."

"Mot de *Roy*, qui seroit très-mal approprié à un *Menestrier*, si d'ailleurs on ne le rapportoit à un jeu du priz: Et de faict il semble que de nostre temps, il y en eust encores quelque remarques, en ce que le mot de *Jouingleur* s'estant par succession de temps tourné en batelage, nous avons veu en nostre jeunesse les Jouingleurs se trouver à certain jour tous les



ans en la ville de Chauny en Picardie, pour faire monstre de leur mestrier devant le monde, à qui mieux. Et ce que j'en dis icy n'est pas pour vilipender ces anciens Rimeurs, ainsi pour monstrier qu'il n'y a chose si belle qui ne s'anéantisse avec le temps."

We see here that, in the time of Pasquier, the poor Minstrel was sunk into as low estimation in France, as he was then or afterwards in England; but by his apology for comparing the *Jouingleurs*, who assembled to exercise their faculty, in his youth, to the ancient *Rimeurs*, it is plain they exerted their skill in rhyme.

As for king Adenes, or Adenez (whose name in the first passage above is corruptly printed *Adams*), he is recorded in the *Bibliothèque des Romans*, Amst. 1734, 12mo, vol i. page 232, to have composed the two romances in verse above mentioned, and a third, entitled, *Le Roman de Bertin*; all three being preserved in a MS. written about 1270. His *Bon Duc Henry*, I conceive to have been Henry Duke of Brabant.

(B B 2) *King of the Minstrels*, &c.] See Anstis's Register of the Order of the Garter, ii. p. 303, who tells us, "The President or Governour of the *Minstrels* had the like denomination of *Roy* in France and Burgundy; and in England, John of Gaunt constituted such an officer by a patent; and long before his time payments were made by the Crown to [a] King of the Minstrels by Edw. I. Regi Roberto Ministrallo scutifero ad arma commoranti ad vadia Regis anno 5to [Bibl. Cotton. Vespas. c. 16. f. 3], as likewise [Libro Garderob. 25 E. I.] Ministrallis in die nuptiarum Comitissæ Holland filiæ Regis, Regi Pago, Johanni Vidulatori, &c. Morello Regi, &c. Druetto Monthaut, et Jacketto de Scot. Regibus, cuilibet eorum, xl. s. Regi Pagio de Hollandia, &c. Under Ed. II. we likewise find other entries, Regi Roberto et aliis Ministrallis facientibus Menistrallias [Ministralcias, qu.] suas coram Rege. [Bibl. Cotton. Nero, c. 8, p. 84, b. Comp. Garderob.] That King granted Willielmo de Morlee dicto Roy de North, Ministrallo Regis, domos quæ fuerunt Johannis le Boteler dicti Roy Brunhaud [Pat. de terr. forisfact. 16 E. III.]" He adds below (p. 304) a similar instance of a *Rex Juglatorum*, and that the "King of the Minstrels" at length was styled in France *Roy des Violons* (Furetiere Diction. Univers.), as with us, "King of the Fiddlers;" on which subject see below, note (E E 2).

(B B 3) The Statute 4 Hen. IV. (1402), c. 27, runs in these terms, "Item, pur eschuir plusieurs diseases et mischiefs qont advenuz devaunt ces heures en la terre de Gales par plusieurs Westours Rymours, Minstralx et autres Vacabondes, ordeignez est et establiz qe nul Westour, Rymour Ministral ne Vacabond soit aucunement sustenuz en la terre de Gales pur faire kymorthas ou coillage sur la commune poeple illoeques." This is among the severe laws against the Welsh, passed during the resentment occasioned by the outrages committed under Owen Glendour; and as the Welsh Bards had excited their countrymen to rebellion against the English government, it is not to be wondered that the Act is conceived in terms of the utmost indignation and contempt against this class of men, who are described as *Rymours*, *Minstralx*, which are apparently here used as only synonymous terms to express the Welsh Bards with the usual exuberance



of our Acts of Parliament; for if their *Ministralx* had been mere musicians, they would not have required the vigilance of the English legislature to suppress them. It was their songs exciting their countrymen to insurrection which produced "les diseases et mischiefs en la terre de Gales."

It is also submitted to the reader, whether the same application of the terms does not still more clearly appear in the Commission issued in 1567, and printed in Evan Evans's *Specimens of Welch Poetry*, 1764, 4to, p. v., for bestowing the SILVER HARP on "the chief of that faculty." For after setting forth "that vagrant and idle persons, naming themselves *Minstrels*, *Rythmers*, and *Bards*, had lately grown into such intolerable multitude within the Principality in North Wales, that not only gentlemen and others by their shameless disorders are oftentimes disquieted in their habitations, but also expert *Minstrels* and *Musicians* in *tonge and cunnyng* thereby much discouraged," &c., and "hindred [of] livings and preferment," &c., it appoints a time and place, wherein all "persons that intend to maintain their living by name or colour of *Minstrels*, *Rythmers*, or *Bards*," within five shires of N. Wales, "shall appear to show their learnings accordingly," &c. And the Commissioners are required to admit such as shall be found worthy, into and under the degrees heretofore in use, so that they may "use, exercise, and follow the sciences and faculties of their professions in such decent order as shall appertain to each of their degrees." And the rest are to return to some honest labour, &c., upon pain to be taken as sturdy and idle vagabonds, &c.

(B B 4) Holingshed translated this passage from Tho. de Elmham's "Vita et Gesta Henrici V." scil. "Soli Omnipotenti Deo se velle victoriam imputari . . . . in tantum, quod cantus de suo triumpho fieri, seu per Citharistas vel alios quoscunque cantari penitus prohibebat." [Edit. Hearnii, 1727, p. 72.] As in his version Holingshed attributes the *making* as well as *singing* ditties to Minstrels, it is plain he knew that men of this profession had been accustomed to do both.

(C C) *The Houshold Book*, &c.] See Section V.

"Of the Noumbre of all my Lords Servaunts."

"Item, Mynstralls in Houshold, iij. viz. A Taberett, a Luyte, and a Rebecc." [The rebeck was a kind of fiddle with three strings.]

#### Sect. XLIV. 3.

"Rewardis to his Lordshipis Servaunts," &c.

"Item, My Lorde usith ande accustomyth to gyf yerly, when his Lordschipp is at home, to his Mynstrails that be daly in his houshold, as his Tabret, Lute, ande Rebek, upon New-Yeres-day in the mornynge when they doo play at my Lordis chambre doure for his Lordschipe and my Lady, xx. s. Viz. xiiij. s. iiij. d. for my Lorde, and vj. s. viij. d. for my Lady, if sche be at my Lords fyndynge, and not at hir owen; and for playing at my Lordis sone and heir chaumbre doure, the Lord Percy, ij. s. And for playinge at the chaumbre doures of my Lords yonger Sonnes



my yonge Maisters, after viii. d. the nece for every of them.—xxiiij. s. iiij. d.”

Sect. XLIV. 2.

“Rewardis to be yeven to strangers, as Players,  
Mynstrails, or any other,” &c.

“Furst, my Lorde usith and accustomyth to gyf to the Kings Jugler;  
.... when they custome to come unto hym yerely, vj. s. viij. d.

“Item, my Lord usith and accustomyth to gyf yerely the Kynge or the  
Queenes Barwarde, if they have one, when they custom to com unto hym  
yerely,—vj. s. viij. d.

“Item, my Lorde usith and accustomyth to gyfe yerly to every Erlis  
Mynstrellis, when they custome to come to hym yerely, iiij. s. iiij. d.  
Ande if they come to my Lord seldome, ones in ij. or iiij. yeres, than  
vj. s. viij. d.

“Item, my Lorde usith and accustomedeth to gife yerely to an Erls  
Mynstrall, if he be his speciall lorde, frende, or kynsman, if they come  
yerely to his Lordschipe.... Ande if they come ‘to my lord’ seldome,  
ones in ii. or iii. yeres, vj. s. viij. d.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“Item, my Lorde useth and accustomyth to gyf yerely a Dookes or  
Erlis Trumpetts, if they com vj. together to his Lordshipp, viz. if they  
come yerly, vj. s. viij. d. Ande if they come but in ij. or iiij. yeres,  
than x. s.

“Item, my Lorde useth and accustometh yerly, when his Lordship is at  
home, to gyf to iiij of the Kyngs Shams, when they com to my Lorde  
yerely x. s.”

\* \* \* \* \*

I cannot conclude this note without observing, that in this enumeration  
the family Minstrels seem to have been musicians only, and yet both the  
Earl’s Trumpets and the King’s Shawms are evidently distinguished from  
the Earl’s Minstrels and the King’s Jugler. Now we find *Jugglers* still  
coupled with *Pipers* in Barklay’s *Egloges*, circ. 1514. (Warton, ii. 254.)

(C C 2) The honours and rewards conferred on Minstrels, &c., in the  
Middle Ages, were excessive, as will be seen by many instances in these  
volumes; vid. notes (E) (F), &c. But more particularly with regard to  
English Minstrels, &c., see T. Warton’s *Hist. of Eng. Poetry*, i. p. 89–92,  
116, &c.; ii. 105, 106, 254, &c. Dr. Burney’s *Hist. of Music*, ii. p. 316–  
319, 397–399, 427, 428.

On this head, it may be sufficient to add the following passage from the  
Fleta, lib. ii. c. 23. “Officium Elemosinarij est, Equos relictos, Robas,  
Pecuniam, et alia ad Elemosinam largiter recipere et fideliter distribuere;  
debet etiam Regem super Elemosinæ largitione crebris summonitionibus  
stimulare et præcipue diebus Sanctorum, et rogare ne Robas suas quæ  
magni sunt precij *Histrionibus*, Blanditoribus, Adulatoribus, Accusatoribus,  
vel *Menestralis*, sed ad Elemosinæ suæ incrementum jubeat largiri.” Et  
in c. 72, “Ministralli, vel Adulatoris.”

(D D) A species of men who did not sing, &c.] It appears from the



passage of Erasmus here referred to, that there still existed in England of that species of Jongleurs or Minstrels, whom the French called by the peculiar name of *Conteurs*, or reciters in prose; it is in his *Ecclesiastes*, where he is speaking of such preachers as imitated the tone of beggars or mountebanks:—"Apud Anglos est simile genus hominum, quales apud Italos sunt Circulatores [Mountebanks] de quibus modo dictum est; qui irrumpunt in convivia Magnatum, aut in Cauponas Vinarias; et argumentum aliquod, quod edidicerunt, recitant; puta mortem omnibus dominari, aut laudem matrimonii. Sed quoniam ea lingua monosyllabis fere constat, quemadmodum Germanica; atque illi [sc. this peculiar species of Reciters] studio vitant cantum, nobis (sc. Erasmus, who did not understand a word of English) latrare videntur verius quam loqui"—Opera, tom. v. c. 958. (Jortin, vol ii. p. 193.) As Erasmus was correcting the vice of preachers, it was more to his point to bring an instance from the moral reciters of prose than from chanters of rhyme; though the latter would probably be more popular, and therefore more common.

(E E) This character is supposed to have been suggested by descriptions of Minstrels in the romance of *Morte Arthur*; but none, it seems, have been found which come nearer to it than the following, which I shall produce, not only that the reader may judge of the resemblance, but to show how nearly the idea of the Minstrel character given in this Essay corresponds with that of our old writers.

Sir Lancelot having been affronted by a threatening abusive letter, which Mark King of Cornwall had sent to Queen Guenever, wherein he "spake shame by her, and Sir Lancelot," is comforted by a knight named Sir Dinadan, who tells him, "I will make a *Lay* for him, and when it is made, I shall make an Harper to sing it before him. So anon he went and made it, and taught it an Harper, that hyght Elyot; and when hee could it, hee taught it to many Harpers. And so . . . the Harpers went straight unto Wales and Cornwaile to sing the Lay . . . which was the worst Lay that ever Harper sung with Harpe, or with any other instrument. And [at a] great feast that King Marke made for joy of [a] victorie which hee had, . . . came Eliot the Harper; . . . and because he was a curious Harper, men heard him sing the same Lay that Sir Dinadan had made, the which spake the most vilanie by King Marke of his treason, that ever man heard. When the Harper had sung his song to the end, King Marke was wonderous wroth with him and said, Thou Harper, how durst thou be so bold to sing this song before me? Sir, said Eliot, wit you well I am a Minstrell, and I must doe as I am commanded of these Lords that *I bear the armes of*. And, Sir King, wit you well that Sir Dinadan a knight of the Round Table made this song, and he made me to sing it before you. Thou saiest well, said King Marke, I charge thee that thou hie thee fast out of my sight. So the Harper departed," &c. [Part ii. c. 113, ed. 1634. See also part iii. c. 5.]

(E E 2) *This Act seems to have put an end to the profession, &c.* Although I conceive that the character ceased to exist, yet the appellation might be continued, and applied to Fiddlers, or other common musicians:



which will account for the mistakes of Sir Peter Leicester, or other modern writers. (See his *Historical Antiquities of Cheshire*, 1673, p. 141.)

In this sense it is used in an Ordinance in the times of Cromwell (1656), wherein it is enacted, that if any of the "persons commonly called Fiddlers or Minstrels shall at any time be taken playing, fiddling, and making music in any inn, ale-house, or tavern, or shall be taken proflering themselves, or desiring, or intreating any . . . to hear them play or make music in any of the places aforesaid;" they are to be "adjudged and declared to be rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars."

This will also account why John of Gaunt's King of the Minstrels at length came to be called, like *le Roy des Violons* in France, vide note (B B 2), King of the Fiddlers. See the common ballad entitled, "The Pedigree, Education, and Marriage of Robinhood with Clorinda, Queen of Tutbury Feast:" which, though prefixed to the modern collection on that subject,<sup>3</sup> seems of much later date than most of the others; for the writer appears to be totally ignorant of all the old traditions concerning this celebrated outlaw, and has given him a very elegant bride instead of his old noted lemman "Maid Marian;" who, together with his chaplain, "Frier Tuck," were his favourite companions, and probably on that account figured in the old Morice dance; as may be seen by the engraving in Mr. Steevens's and Mr. Malone's editions of Shakspeare: by whom she is mentioned, 1 *Hen. IV.*, act iii. sc. 3. (See also Warton, i. 245, ii. 237.) Whereas, from this ballad's concluding with an exhortation to "pray for the King," and "that he may get children," &c., it is evidently posterior to the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and can scarce be older than the reign of King Charles I.; for King James I. had no issue after his accession to the throne of England. It may even have been written since the Restoration, and only express the wishes of the nation for issue on the marriage of their favourite king Charles II., on his marriage with the Infanta of Portugal. I think it is not found in the Pepys Collection.

(F F) *Historical song, or ballad.*] The English word *ballad* is evidently from the French *balade*, as the latter is from the Italian *ballata*; which the Crusca Dictionary defines, *canzone, che si canta ballando*, "A song which is sung during a dance." So Dr. Burney [ii. 342], who refers to a collection of *Ballette* published by Gastaldi, and printed at Antwerp in 1596 [iii. 226].

But the word appears to have had an earlier origin, for in the decline of the Roman empire these trivial songs were called *ballistea* and *saltatiunculæ*. *Ballisteum*, Salmasius says, is properly *ballistium*. Gr. *Βαλλιστείον*, "ἀπὸ τοῦ βαλλίζω . . . Βαλλιστία *Saltatio* . . . *Ballistium* igitur est quod vulgo vocamus *ballet*; nam inde deducta vox nostra."—Salmas. Not. in *Hist. Ang. Scriptores*, vi. p. 349.

<sup>3</sup> Of the twenty-four songs in what is now called *Robin Hood's Garland*, many are so modern as not to be found in Pepys's Collection, completed only in 1700. In the folio MS. (described in p. vii) are ancient fragments of the following, viz.—Robin Hood and the Beggar.—Robin Hood and the Butcher.—Robin Hood and Fryer Tucke.—Robin Hood and the Pindar.—Robin Hood and Queen Catharine, in two parts.—Little John and the four Beggars, and "Robin Hoode his Death." This last, which is very curious has no resemblance to any that have been published; and the others are extremely different from the printed copies; but they unfortunately are in the beginning of the MS., where half of every leaf hath been torn away.



In the Life of the Emperor Aurelian by Fl. Vopiscus may be seen two of these *ballistæ*, as sung by the boys skipping and dancing, on account of a great slaughter made by the emperor with his own hand in the Sarmatic war. The first is,

"Mille, mille, mille decollavimus,  
Unus homo mille decollavimus,  
Mille vivat, qui mille occidit.  
Tantum vini habet nemo  
Quantum fudit sanguinis."

The other was,

"Mille Sarmatas, mille Francos  
Semel et semel occidimus.  
Mille Persas quærimus."

Salmasius (in loc.) shows that the trivial poets of that time were wont to form their metre of Trochaic Tetrametre Catalectics, divided into distichs. [Ibid p. 350.] This becoming the metre of the hymns in the church service, to which the monks at length superadded rhyming terminations, was the origin of the common trochaic metre in the modern languages. This observation I owe to the learned author of *Irish Antiquities*, 4to.

(F F 2) *Little Miscellanies named Garlands, &c.*] In the Pepysian and other libraries are preserved a great number of these in black-letter, 12mo, under the following quaint and affected titles, viz.,

1. A Crowne Garland of Goulden Roses gathered out of England's Royal Garden, &c., by Richard Johnson, 1612. [In the Bodleian Library.] 2. The Golden Garland of Princely Delight.—3. The Garland of Good-will, by T. D. 1631.—4. The Royal Garland of Love and Delight, by T. D.—5. The Garland of Delight, &c., by Tho. Delone.—6. The Garland of Love and Mirth, by Thomas Lanfier.—7. Cupid's Garland set round with Gilded Roses.—8. The Garland of Withered Roses, by Martin Parker, 1656—9. The Shepherd's Garland of Love, Loyalty, &c.—10. The Country Garland.—11. The Golden Garland of Mirth and Merriment.—12. The Lover's Garland.—13. Neptune's fair Garland.—14. England's fair Garland.—15. Robin Hood's Garland.—16. The Maiden's Garland.—17. A Loyal Garland of Mirth and Pastime.—18. A Royal Garland of New Songs.—19. The Jovial Garland, 8th edit. 1691.—&c., &c., &c.

This sort of petty publications had anciently the name of Penny-Merriments: as little religious tracts of the same size were called Penny-Godlinesses. In the Pepysian Library are multitudes of both kinds.

(G G) *The term Minstrel was not confined to a mere musician in this country any more than on the Continent.*] The discussion of the question whether the term Minstrel was applied in England to singers and composers of songs, &c., or confined to the performers on musical instruments, was properly reserved for this place, because much light hath already been thrown upon the subject in the preceding notes, to which it will be sufficient to refer the reader.

That on the Continent the Minstrel was understood not to be a mere musician, but a singer of verses, hath been shown in notes (B), (C), (P),



(A A), &c.<sup>4</sup> And that he was also a maker of them, is evident from the passage in (C), p. xlvi, where the most noted romances are said to be of the composition of these men. And in (B B), p. lxxii, we have the titles of some of which a Minstrel was the author, who has himself left his name upon record.

The old English names for one of this profession were Gleeman,<sup>5</sup> Jogeler,<sup>6</sup> and latterly Minstrel; not to mention Harper, &c. In French he was called *Jongleur* or *Jugleur*, *Menestrel* or *Menestrier*.<sup>7</sup> The writers of the Middle Ages expressed the character in Latin by the words *Joculator*, *Mimus*, *Histrion*, *Ministrellus*, &c. These terms, however modern critics may endeavour to distinguish and apply them to different classes, and although they may be sometimes mentioned as if they were distinct, I cannot find, after a very strict research, to have had any settled appropriate difference, but they appear to have been used indiscriminately by the oldest writers, especially in England; where the most general and comprehensive name was latterly Minstrel, Lat. *Ministrellus*, &c.

Thus *Joculator* (Eng. Jogeler, or Juglar) is used as synonymous to *Citharista*, note (K), p. lvi., and to *Cantor* (ibid.), and to *Minstrel*. (Vide infra.) We have also positive proof that the subjects of his songs were gestes and romantic tales. (V 2) note.

So *Mimus* is used as synonymous to *Joculator* (M), p. lviii. He was rewarded for his singing (N), p. lix, and he both sang, harped, and dealt in that sport (T 2), which is elsewhere called *Ars Joculatoria* (M), ubi supra.

Again, *Histrion* is also proved to have been a singer (Z), p. lxviii, and to have gained rewards by his *Verba Joculatoria* (E), p. xlix. And *Histriones* is the term by which the French word *Ministralx* is most frequently rendered into Latin (W), p. lxvi; (B B), p. lxxii, &c.

The fact therefore is sufficiently established, that this order of men were in England, as well as on the Continent, *singers*: so that it only becomes a dispute about words, whether here, under the more general name of Minstrels, they are described as having sung.

But in proof of this, we have only to turn to so common a book as T. Warton's *History of English Poetry*, where we shall find extracted from records the following instances:—

Ex Registr. Priorat. S. Swithin Winton. (sub anno 1374.) "In festo Alwyni Epi. . . . Et durante pietancia in Aula Conventus sex Ministralli, cum quatuor Citharisatoribus, faciebant Ministralcias suas. Et post cenam, in magna camera arcuata Dom. Prioris cantabant idem *Gestum* in qua Camera suspendebatur, ut moris est, magnum dorsale Prioris habens picturas trium Regum Coiein. Veniebant autem dicti *Joculatores* a Castello Domini Regis et ex familia Epi" (vol. ii. p. 174). Here the Minstrels and Harpers are expressly called *Joculatores*; and as the Harpers

<sup>4</sup> That the French Minstrel was a singer and composer, &c., appears from many passages translated by M. Le Grand, in *Fabliaux ou Contes*, &c. See tom. i. p. 37, 47; ii. 306, 313, et seq.; iii. 266, &c. Yet this writer, like other French critics, endeavours to reduce to distinct and separate classes the men of this profession, under the precise names of *Fablier*, *Conteur*, *Menestrier*, *Menestrel*, and *Jongleur* (tom. i. Pref. p. xcvi). whereas his own Tales confute all these nice distinctions, or prove at least that the title of *Menestrier*, or Minstrel, was applied to them all.

<sup>5</sup> See p. liii.

<sup>6</sup> See p. lxvi

<sup>7</sup> See p. xxxi, note.



had musical instruments, the singing must have been by the Minstrels, or by both conjointly.

For that Minstrels sang we have undeniable proof in the following entry in the Accompt roll of the Priory of Bicester, in Oxfordshire (under the year 1432). "Dat. Sex Ministrallis de Bokyngham *cantantibus* in refectorio Martyrium Septem Dormientium in Festo Epiphanie, iv. s." (Vol. ii. p. 175.)

In like manner our old English writers abound with passages wherein the Minstrel is represented as singing. To mention only a few:

In the old romance of *Emaré* (vol. ii. no. 15, p. 31), which, from the obsolescence of the style, the nakedness of the story, the barrenness of incidents, and some other particulars, I should judge to be next in point of time to *Horn-Child*, we have

—"I have herd Menstrelles syng yn sawe."

Stanza 27.

In a poem of Adam Davie (who flourished about 1312), we have this listich,

"Merry it is in halle to here the harpe,  
The Minstrelles syng, the Jogelours carpe."

T. Warton, i. p. 225.

So William of Nassyngton (circ. 1480) as quoted by Mr. Tyrwhitt (Chaucer, iv. 319),

— "I will make no vain carpinge  
Of dedes of armys ne of amours  
As dus Mynstrelles and Jestours [Gestours].  
That makys carpinge in many a place  
Of Octaviane and Isebrase,  
And of many other Jestes [Gestes]  
And namely whan they come to festes.<sup>8</sup>

See also the description of the Minstrel in note (E E) from *Morte Arthur*, which appears to have been compiled about the time of this last writer. —See T. Warton, ii. 235.

By proving that Minstrels were singers of the old romantic songs and gestes, &c., we have in effect proved them to have been the makers at least of some of them. For the names of their authors being not preserved, to whom can we so probably ascribe the composition of many of these old popular rhymes as to the men who devoted all their time and talents to the recitation of them? especially as in the rhymes themselves Minstrels are often represented as the makers or composers.

Thus in the oldest of all, *Horn-Child*, having assumed the character of a Harper or Jogeler, is in consequence said (fo. 92) to have

"made Rymenild [his mistress] a lay."

In the old romance of *Emaré*, we have this exhortation to Minstrels, as

<sup>8</sup> The fondness of the English (even the most illiterate) to hear Tales and Rhymes is much dwelt on by Rob. de Brunne, in 1330. (Warton i. pp. 59, 65, 75.) All Rhymes were then sung to the harp: even *Troilus and Cresseide*, though almost as long as the *Æneid*, was to be "redde . . . or else songe."—l. ult. (Warton, i. 388.)



composers, otherwise they could not have been at liberty to choose their subjects (st. 2).

“Menstrelles that walken fer and wyde  
Her and ther in every a syde  
In mony a dyverse londe  
Sholde ut her bygynnyng  
Speke of that rightwes kyng  
That made both see and londe,” &c.

And in the old song or geste of *Guy and Colbronde* (vol. ii. no. 4, p. 96), the Minstrel thus speaks of himself in the first person :

“When meate and drinke is great plentye  
Then lords and ladyes still wil be  
And sitt and solace lythe  
Then itt is time for MEE to speake  
Of keene knights and kempes great  
Such carping for to kythe.”

We have seen already that the Welsh *Bards*, who were undoubtedly composers of the songs they chanted to the harp, could not be distinguished by our legislators from our own *Rimers*, *Minstrels*.—Vide (B B 3), and p. xxxvi.

And that the Provençal *Troubadour* of our King Richard, who is called by M. Favine *Jongleur*, and by M. Fauchet *Menestrel*, is by the old English translator termed a Rhymer or Minstrel when he is mentioning the fact of his composing some verses (p. xxxi).

And lastly, that Holingshed, translating the prohibition of King Henry V., forbidding any songs to be composed on his victory, or to be sung by harpers or others, roundly gives it, he would not permit “any ditties to be made and sung by Minstrels on his glorious victory,” &c.—Vide p. xxxvii, and note (B B 4).

Now that this order of men, at first called Gleemen, then Jugglers, and afterwards more generally Minstrels, existed here from the Conquest, who entertained their hearers with chanting, to the harp or other instruments, songs and tales of chivalry, or, as they were called, *gests*,<sup>9</sup> and romances in verse in the English language, is proved by the existence of the very compositions they so chanted, which are still preserved in great abundance; and exhibit a regular series from the time our language was almost Saxon, till after its improvements in the age of Chaucer, who enumerates many of them. And as the Norman-French was in the time of this bard still the courtly language, it shows that the English was not thereby excluded from affording entertainment to our nobility, who are so often addressed therein by the title of *lordings*: and sometimes more positively, “lords and ladies” (p. lxxxi).

And though many of these were translated from the French, others are evidently of English origin,<sup>1</sup> which appear in their turns to have afforded

<sup>9</sup> GESTS at length came to signify adventures or incidents in general. So in a narrative of the Journey into Scotland of Queen Margaret and her attendants, on her marriage with K. James IV. in 1503 [in Appendix to Leland Collect. iv. p. 265], we are promised an account “of their Gestys and manners during the said Voyage.”

<sup>1</sup> The Romance of *Richard Cœur de Lion* (no. 25) I should judge to be of English origin, from the names Wardrewe and Eldrede, &c., vol. ii. p. 101. As is also *Eger and Grime* (no. 12), vol. ii. p. 99, wherein a knight is named Sir Gray Steel, and a lady



versions into that language; a sufficient proof of that intercommunity between the French and English Minstrels which hath been mentioned in a preceding page. Even the abundance of such translations into English, being all adapted for popular recitation, sufficiently establishes the fact, that the English Minstrels had a great demand for such compositions, which they were glad to supply, whether from their own native stores or from other languages.

We have seen above, that the *Joculator*, *Mimus*, *Histrion*, whether these characters were the same, or had any real difference, were all called Minstrels; as was also the Harper,<sup>2</sup> when the term implied a singer, if not a composer, of songs, &c. By degrees the name of Minstrel was extended to vocal and instrumental musicians of every kind: and as in the establishment of royal and noble houses the latter would necessarily be most numerous, so we are not to wonder that the band of music (entered under the general name of Minstrels) should consist of instrumental performers chiefly, if not altogether: for, as the composer or singer of heroic tales to the harp would necessarily be a solitary performer, we must not expect to find him in the band along with the trumpeters, fluters, &c.

However, as we sometimes find mention of "Minstrels of music:"<sup>3</sup> so at other times we hear of "expert Minstrels and Musicians of tongue and cunning" (B B 3), p. lxxiv,<sup>4</sup> meaning doubtless by the former Singers, and probably by the latter phrase Composers of songs. Even "Minstrels music" seems to be applied to the species of verse used by Minstrels in the passage quoted below.<sup>5</sup>

But although, from the predominancy of instrumental music, Minstrelsy was at length chiefly to be understood in this sense, yet it was still applied to the poetry of Minstrels so late as the time of Queen Elizabeth, as appears in the following extract from Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie*, p. 9. Who, speaking of the first composers of Latin verses in rhyme, says,

who excels in surgery is called *Loospaine*, or *Lose-pain*: these surely are not derived from France.

<sup>2</sup> See the Romance of *Sir Isenbras* (vol. ii. no. 14, p. 99), sign. a.

"Harpers loved him in Hall  
With other Minstrels all."

<sup>3</sup> T. Warton, ii. 258, note (a), from Leland's Collect. (vol. iv. Append. edit. 1774, p. 267.)

<sup>4</sup> The curious author of the *Tour in Wales*, 1773, 4to. p. 435, I find to have read these words "in toune and contrey;" which I can scarce imagine to have been applicable to Wales at that time. Nor can I agree with him in the representation he has given (p. 367) concerning the *Cymmorth* or meeting, wherein the Bards exerted their powers to excite their countrymen to war; as if it were by a deduction of the particulars he enumerates, and as it should seem in the way of harangue, &c. After which, "the band of minstrels . . . struck up; the harp, the *crwth*, and the pipe filled the measures of enthusiasm, which the others had begun to inspire." Whereas it is well known, that the Bard chanted his enthusiastic effusions to the harp; and as for the term *Minstrel*, it was not, I conceive, at all used by the Welsh; and in English it comprehended both the bard and the musician.

<sup>5</sup> "Your ordinarie rimers use very much their measures in the odde, as nine and cleven, and the sharpe accent upon the last sillable, which therefore makes him go ill favouredly and like 'a MINSTRELS MUSICKE.'"—Puttenham's *Arte of Eng. Poesie*, 1589, p. 59. This must mean his vocal music, otherwise it appears not applicable to the subject.



"All that they wrote to the favor or prayse of princes, they did it in such manner of Minstralsie; and thought themselves no small fooles, when they could make their verses go all in *ryme*."


I shall conclude this subject with the following description of Minstrelsy given by John Lidgate at the beginning of the 15th century, as it shows what a variety of entertainments were then comprehended under this term, together with every kind of instrumental music then in use:—

— "Al maner MYNSTRALCYE,  
That any man kan specifye.  
Ffor there were Rotys of Almayne,  
And eke of Arragon, and Spayne:  
SONGES, Stampes, and eke Dauuces;  
Divers plente of plesaunces;  
And many unkouth NOTYS NEW  
OF SWICHE FOLKE AS LOVID TREUE.<sup>6</sup>  
And instrumentys that did excelle,  
Many moo than I kan telle.  
Harpys, Fythales, and eke Rotys  
Well according to her [*i. e.* their] notys,  
Lutys, Ribibles, and Geternes,  
More for estatys, than tavernes:  
Orgay[n]s, Cytolis, Monacordys.—  
There were Trumpes, and Trumpettes,  
Lowde Shall[m]ys, and Doucettes."—

T. Warton, ii. 225, note (\*).

<sup>6</sup> By this phrase I understand, new Tales or narrative Rhymes composed by the Minstrels on the subject of true and faithful Lovers, &c.

#### END OF THE ESSAY.

 The foregoing Essay on the Ancient Minstrels has been very much enlarged and improved since the first edition, with respect to the Anglo-Saxon Minstrels, in consequence of some objections proposed by the reverend and learned Mr. Pegge, which the reader may find in the second volume of the ARCHÆOLOGIA, printed by the Antiquarian Society; but which that gentleman has since retracted in the most liberal and candid manner in the third volume of the ARCHÆOLOGIA, No. xxxiv. p. 310.

And in consequence of similar objections respecting the English Minstrels after the Conquest, the subsequent part hath been much enlarged, and additional light thrown upon the subject; which, to prevent cavil, hath been extended to MINSTRELSY in all its branches, as it was established in England whether by natives or foreigners.

"I never heard the old song of Percie and Douglas, that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet: and yet 'it' is sung but by some blinde crowder, with no rougher voice, than rude style; which beeing so evill apparelled in the dust and cobweb of that uncivill age, what would it work, trimmed in the gorgeous eloquence of Pindare!"

SIR PHILIP SYDNEY'S 'DEFENCE OF POETRY.



# RELIQUES

OF

## ANCIENT POETRY, &c.

---

### BOOK I.

---

#### I.

#### The Ancient Ballad of Chevy-Chase.

THE fine heroic song of CHEVY-CHASE has ever been admired by competent judges. Those genuine strokes of nature and artless passion, which have endeared it to the most simple readers, have recommended it to the most refined; and it has equally been the amusement of our childhood, and the favourite of our riper years.

Mr. Addison has given an excellent critique<sup>1</sup> on this very popular ballad, but is mistaken with regard to the antiquity of the common received copy; for this, if one may judge from the style, cannot be older than the time of Elizabeth, and was probably written after the eulogium of Sir Philip Sidney: perhaps in consequence of it. I flatter myself, I have here recovered the genuine antique poem, the true original song; which appeared rude even in the time of Sir Philip, and caused him to lament that it was so evil apparelled in the rugged garb of antiquity.

This curiosity is printed from an old manuscript, at the end of Hearne's Preface to Gul. Nubrigiensis Hist. 1719, 8vo, vol. i. To the MS. copy is subjoined the name of the author, RYCHARD SHEALE:<sup>2</sup> whom Hearne had so little judgment as to suppose to be the same with a R. Sheale, who was living in 1588. But whoever examines the gradation of language and idiom in the following volumes, will be convinced that this is the production of an earlier poet. It is indeed expressly mentioned among some very ancient songs in an old book intituled, The Complaint of Scotland,<sup>3</sup> (fol. 42,)

<sup>1</sup> *Spectator*, No. 70, 74.

<sup>2</sup> Subscribed, after the usual manner of our old poets, explicitly [explicit] quoth Rychard Sheale.

One of the earliest productions of the Scottish press now to be found

under the title of the HUNTIS OF CHEVET, where the two following lines are also quoted:

The Perssee and the Mongumrye mette<sup>4</sup>  
That day, that day, that gentil day:<sup>5</sup>

Which, though not quite the same as they stand in the ballad, yet differ not more than might be owing to the author's quoting from memory. Indeed, whoever considers the style and orthography of this old poem, will not be inclined to place it lower than the time of Henry VI.; as, on the other hand, the mention of **James the Scottish King**,<sup>6</sup> with one or two anachronisms, forbids us to assign it an earlier date. King James I., who was prisoner in this kingdom at the death of his father,<sup>7</sup> did not wear the crown of Scotland till the second year of our Henry VI.,<sup>8</sup> but before the end of that long reign, a third James had mounted the throne.<sup>9</sup> A succession of two or three Jameses, and the long detention of one of them in England, would render the name familiar to the English, and dispose a poet in those rude times to give it to any Scottish king he happened to mention.

So much for the date of this old ballad: with regard to its subject, although it has no countenance from history, there is room to think it had originally some foundation in fact. It was one of the laws of the Marches, frequently renewed between the two nations, that neither party should hunt in the other's borders, without leave from the proprietors or their deputies.<sup>1</sup> There had long been a rivalry between the two martial families of Percy and Douglas, which, heightened by the national quarrel, must have produced frequent challenges and struggles for superiority, petty invasions of their respective domains, and sharp contests for the point of honour, which would not always be recorded in history. Something of this kind we may suppose gave rise to the ancient ballad of the HUNTING A' THE CHEVIAT.<sup>2</sup> Percy, Earl of Northumberland, had vowed to hunt for three days in the Scottish border without condescending to ask leave from Earl Douglas,

---

The title-page was wanting in the copy here quoted; but it is supposed to have been printed in 1540.—See Ames.

<sup>4</sup> See Pt. 2. v. 25.

<sup>5</sup> See Pt. 1. v. 104.

<sup>6</sup> Pt. 2, v. 36, 140.

<sup>7</sup> Who died Aug. 5, 1406, in the seventh year of our Hen. IV.

<sup>8</sup> James I. was crowned May 22, 1424; murdered, Feb. 21, 1436–7.

<sup>9</sup> In 1460. Hen. VI. was deposed 1461; restored and slain, 1471.

<sup>1</sup> Item. . . . Concordatum est, quod, . . . NULLUS unius partis vel alterius ingrediatur terras, boschas, forrestas, warrenas, loca, dominia quæcunque alicujus partis alterius subditi, causa venandi, piscandi, aucupandi, disportum aut solatium in eisdem, aliave quacunque de causa, ABSQUE LICENTIA ejus . . . ad quem . . . loca . . . pertinent, aut de deputatis suis prius capt. et obtent.—Vide Bp. Nicholson's *Leges Marchiarum*, 1705, 8vo, pp. 27, 51.

<sup>2</sup> This was the original title.—See the ballad, Pt. 1. v. 101; Pt. 2, v. 165.



who was either lord of the soil, or lord-warden of the Marches. Douglas would not fail to resent the insult, and endeavour to repel the intruders by force: this would naturally produce a sharp conflict between the two parties; something of which, it is probable, did really happen, though not attended with the tragical circumstances recorded in the ballad; for these are evidently borrowed from the BATTLE OF OTTERBOURN,<sup>3</sup> a very different event, but which after-times would easily confound with it. That battle might be owing to some such previous affront as this of CHEVY-CHASE, though it has escaped the notice of historians. Our poet has evidently jumbled the two events together; if, indeed, the lines<sup>4</sup> in which this mistake is made are not rather spurious, and the after-insertion of some person, who did not distinguish between the two stories.

Hearne has printed this ballad without any division of stanzas, in long lines, as he found it in the old written copy; but it is usual to find the distinction of stanzas neglected in ancient MSS., where, to save room, two or three verses are frequently given in one line undivided.—See flagrant instances in the Harleian Catalogue, No. 2253, s. 29, 34, 61, 70, et passim.

THE FIRST FIT.<sup>5</sup>

THE Persè owt off Northombarlande,  
And a vowe to God mayd he,  
That he wold hunte in the mountayns  
Off Chyviat within dayes thre,  
In the mauger of doughtè Dogles,  
And all that ever with him be.

5

The fattiste hartes in all Cheviat  
He sayd he wold kill, and cary them away:  
“Be my feth.” sayd the dougheti Doglas agayn,  
“I wyll let that hontyng yf that I may.”

10

Then the Persè owt off Banborowe cam,  
With him a myghtye meany;  
With fifteen hondrith archares bold;  
The wear chosen owt of shyars thre.<sup>6</sup>

Ver. 5, magger in Hearne's P.C. [Printed Copy.]

V. 11, The the Persè. P.C.  
bone. P.C.

V. 13, archardes bolde off blood and

<sup>3</sup> See the next ballad.

<sup>4</sup> Vide Pt. 2, v. 167.

<sup>5</sup> Fit, see v. 100.

<sup>6</sup> By these “shyars thre” is probably meant three districts in North-umberland, which still go by the name of *shires*, and are all in the neighbourhood of Cheviot. These are *Island-shire*, being the district so named from Holy-Island; *Norehamshire*, so called from the town and castle of Noreham (or Norham); and *Bamboroughshire*, the ward or hundred belonging to Bamborough castle and town.

This begane on a Monday at morn 15  
 In Cheviat the hillys so he;  
 The chyld may rue that ys un-born,  
 It was the mor pittè.

The dryvars thorowe the woodès went, 20  
 For to reas the dear;  
 Bomen bickarte uppone the bent  
 With ther browd aras cleare.

Then the wyld thorowe the woodès went,  
 On every sydè shear;  
 Grea-hondes thorowe the greves glent, 25  
 For to kyll thear dear.

The begane in Chyviat the hyls above,  
 Yerly on a Monnyn day;  
 Be that it drewe to the oware off none  
 A hondrith fat hartes ded ther lay. 30

The blewe a mort uppone the bent,  
 The semblyd on sydis shear;  
 To the quyrry then the Persè went,  
 To se the bryttlynge off the deare.

He sayd, "It was the Duglas promys 35  
 This day to met me hear;  
 But I wyste he wold faylle, verament:"  
 A gret oth the Persè swear.

At the laste a squyar off Northombelonde 40  
 Lokyde at his hand full ny;  
 He was war ath the doughetie Doglas comynge,  
 With him a myghtè meany;

Both with spear, 'byll,' and brande;  
 Yt was a myghti sight to se:  
 Hardyar men, both off hart nar hande, 45  
 Wear not in Christiantè.

V. 19. throrowe. P.C.  
 V. 41, ath the; a' the.

V. 31, blwe a mot. P.C.  
 V. 42, myghtte. P.C. passim.

V. 43, brylly. P.C.



The wear twenty hondrith spear-men good,  
 Withouten any fayle ;  
 The wear borne a-long be the watter a Twyde,  
 Yth, bowndes of Tividale.

50

"Leave off the brytlyng of the dear," he sayde,  
 "And to your bowys tayk good heed ;  
 For never sithe ye wear on your mothars borne  
 Had ye never so mickle need."

The dougheti Dogglas on a stede  
 He rode att his men beforne ;  
 His armor glytteryde as dyd a glede ;  
 A bolder barne was never born.

55

"Tell me 'what' men ye ar," he says,  
 "Or whos men that ye be :  
 Who gave youe leave to hunte in this  
 Chyviat chays in the spyt of me?"

60

The first mane that ever him an answeare mayd,  
 Yt was the good Lord Persè :

"We wyll not tell the 'what' men we ar," he says, 65  
 "Nor whos men that we be ;  
 But we wyll hount hear in this chays,  
 In the spyte of thyne and of the.

"The fattiste hartes in all Chyviat  
 We have kyld, and cast to carry them a-way." 70  
 "Be my troth," sayd the doughtè Dogglas agayn,  
 "Ther-for the ton of us shall de this day."

Then sayd the doughtè Doglas  
 Unto the Lord Persè :

"To kyll all thes giltles men, 75  
 A-las ! it wear great pittè.

"But, Persè, thowe art a lord of lande,  
 I am a yerle callyd within my contrè ;  
 Let all our men uppone a parti stande,  
 And do the battell off the and of me." 80

V. 48, withowte . . . feale. P.C.

V. 52, boys look ye tayk. P.C.

V. 54, ned. P.C.

V. 59, whos. P.C.

V. 65, whoys P.C.

V. 71, agay. P.C.

"Nowe Cristes cors on his crowne," sayd the Lord Perse,  
 "Who-soever ther-to says nay;  
 Be my troth, doughtè Doglas," he says,  
 "Thow shalt never se that day;

"Nethar in Ynglonde, Skottlonde, nar France, 85  
 Nor for no man of a woman born,  
 But, and fortune be my chance,  
 I dar met him, on man for on."

Then bespayke a squyar off Northombarlonde,  
 Ric. Wytharynton<sup>7</sup> was his nam; 90  
 "It shall never be told in Sothe-Ynglonde," he says,  
 "To Kyng Herry the Fourth for sham."

"I wat youc byn great lordes twa,  
 I am a poor squyar of lande;  
 I wyll never se my captayne fyght on a fylde, 95  
 And stande my-selffe, and looke on,  
 But whyll I may my weppone welde,  
 I wyll not 'fayl' both harte and hande."

That day, that day, that dredfull day:  
 The first FIT<sup>8</sup> here I fynde. 100  
 And you wyll here any mor a' the hountyng a' the  
 Chyviat,  
 Yet ys ther mor behynde.

### THE SECOND FIT.

THE Yngglishe men hade ther bowys yebent,  
 Ther hartes were good yenoughe;  
 The first of arros that the shote off,  
 Seven skore spear-men the sloughe.

V. 81, sayd the the. P. C.      V. 88, on, i.e. one.  
 V. 93, twaw. P.C.      V. 101, youe . . . hountyng. P.C.  
 V. 3, first, i.e. flight.

<sup>7</sup> This is probably corrupted in the MS. for Rog. Widdrington, who was at the head of the family in the reign of K. Edw. III. There were several successively of the names of *Roger* and *Ralph*, but none of the name of *Richard*, as appears from the genealogies in the Herald's office.

<sup>8</sup> FIT.—Vide Gloss.



Yet bydys the Yerle Doglas uppon the bent,  
A captayne good yenoughe,  
And that was sene verament,  
For he wrought hom both woo and wouche.

5

The Dogglas pertyd his ost in thre,  
Lyk a cheffe cheften off pryde,  
With suar speares off myghttè tre,  
The cum in on every syde:

10

Thrughe our Yngglishe archery  
Gave many a wounde full wyde;  
Many a doughete the garde to dy,  
Which ganyde them no pryde.

15

The Yngglishe men let thear bowys be,  
And pulde owt brandes that wer bright;  
It was a hevy syght to se  
Bryght swordes on basnites lyght.

20

Thorowe ryche male and myne-ye-ple,  
Many sterne the stroke downe streght;  
Many a freyke that was full free,  
Ther undar foot dyd lyght.

At last the Duglas and the Persè met,  
Lyk to captayns of myght and mayne;  
The swapte togethar tyll the both swat,  
With swordes that were of fyn myllàn.

25

Thes worthè freckys for to fyght,  
Ther-to the wear full fayne,  
Tyll the bloode owte off thear basnetes sprete  
As ever dyd heal or rayne.

30

"Holde the, Persè," sayd the Doglas,  
"And i' feth I shall the brynge  
Wher thowe shalte have a yerls wagis  
Of Jamy our Scottish kynge.

35

V. 5, byddys. P.C.

V. 21, throrowe. P.C.

Ibid. and of, P.C.

V. 17, boys. P.C.

V. 22, done. P.C.

V. 32, ran. P.C.

V. 18, briggt. P.C.

V. 26, to, i.e. two.

V. 33, helde. P.C.

- "Thoue shalte have thy ransom fre,  
 I hight the hear this thinge,  
 For the manfullyste man yet art thoue,  
 That ever I conqueryd in filde fightyng." 40
- "Nay 'then,' " sayd the Lord Persè,  
 " I tolde it the beforne,  
 That I wolde never yeldyde be  
 To no man of a woman born."
- With that ther cam an arrowe hastely, 45  
 Forthe off a mightie wane ;<sup>9</sup>  
 Hit hathe strekene the Yerle Douglas  
 In at the brest bane.
- Thoroue lyvar and longs bathe  
 The sharp arrowe ys gane, 50  
 That never after in all his lyffe-days  
 He spayke mo wordes but ane :  
 That was,<sup>1</sup> " Fyghte ye, my merry men, whyllys ye may,  
 For my lyff-days ben gan."
- The Persè leanyde on his brande, 55  
 And sawe the Douglas de ;  
 He tooke the dede man be the hande,  
 And sayd, " Wo ys me for the !
- " To have savyde thy lyffe, I wold have pertyd with  
 My landes for years thre, 60  
 For a better man, of hart nare of hande,  
 Was not in all the north countrè."
- Off all that se a Skottishe knyght,  
 Was callyd Sir Hewe the Mongon-byrry ;  
 He sawe the Douglas to the deth was dyght, 65  
 He spendyd a spear, a trusti tre :
- He rod uppon a corsiare  
 Throughe a hondrith archery ;  
 He never styntyde, nar never blane,  
 Tyll he came to the good Lord Persè. 70

V. 49, throroue. P.C.

<sup>9</sup> Wane, i.e. ane, one, sc. man; an arrow came from a mighty one: from a mighty man.

<sup>1</sup> This seems to have been a gloss added.



He set uppone the Lord Perse  
 A dynte that was full soare;  
 With a suar spear of a myghtè tre  
 Clean thorow the body he the Persè bore,  
 A' the tothar syde that a man myght se 75  
 A large cloth yard and mare:  
 Towe bettar captayns wear nat in Cristiantè,  
 Then that day slain wear thare.  
 An archar off Northomberlonde  
 Say slean was the Lord Persè; 80  
 He bar a bende-bow in his hande,  
 Was made off trusti tre.  
 An arow, that a cloth yarde was lang,  
 To th' hard stele halyde he;  
 A dynt that was both sad and soar, 85  
 He sat on Sir Hewe the Mongon-byrry.  
 The dynt yt was both sad and 'soar,'  
 That he on Mongon-byrry sete;  
 The swane-fethars, that his arrowe bar,  
 With his hart-blood the wear wete.<sup>2</sup> 90  
 Ther was never a freake wone foot wolde fle,  
 But still in stour dyd stand,  
 Heawyng on yche othar, whyll the myght dre,  
 With many a bal-ful brande.  
 This battell begane in Chyviat 95  
 An owar befor the none,  
 And when even-song bell was rang,  
 The battell was nat half done.  
 The tooke 'on' on ethar hand  
 Be the lyght off the mone; 100  
 Many hade no strength for to stande,  
 In Chyviat the hillys abone.

V. 74, ber. P.C.

V. 78, ther. P.C.

V. 80, Say, *i.e.* sawe.

V. 84, haylde. P.C.

V. 87, sar. P.C.

V. 102, abou. P.C.

<sup>2</sup> This incident is taken from the battle of Otterbourn; in which Sir Hugh Montgomery, Knt. (son of John Lord Montgomery), was slain with an arrow.—Vide Crawford's *Peerage*.

Of fifteen hondrith archers of Ynglonde  
 Went away but fifti and thre ;  
 Of twenty hondrith spear-men of Skotlonde, 105  
 But even five and fifti :  
 But all wear slayne Cheviat within ;  
 The hade no strengthe to stand on he :  
 The chylde may rue that is un-borne,  
 It was the mor pittè. 110  
 Thear was slayne with the Lord Persè,  
 Sir John of Agerstone,  
 Sir Roger, the hinde Hartly,  
 Sir Wylllyam, the bold Hearone.  
 Sir Jorg, the worthè Lovele, 115  
 A knyght of great renowen,  
 Sir Raff, the ryche Rugbè,  
 With dyntes wear beaten dowene.  
 For Wetharryngton my harte was wo,  
 That ever he slayne shulde be ; 120  
 For when both his leggis wear hewyne in to,  
 He knyled and fought on hys kne.  
 Ther was slayne with the dougheti Douglas,  
 Sir Hewe the Mongon-byrry,  
 Sir Davye Lwdale, that worthè was, 125  
 His sistars son was he :  
 Sir Charles a Murrè in that place,  
 That never a foot wolde fle ;  
 Sir Hewe Maxwell, a lorde he was,  
 With the Duglas dyd he dey. 130  
 So on the morrowe the mayde them byears  
 Off byrch and hasell so 'gray' ;  
 Many wedous with wepyng tears<sup>3</sup>  
 Cam to fach ther makys a-way.

V. 108, strenge . . . hy. P.C.

V. 115, lóule. P.C.

V. 121, in to, i.e. in two.

V. 122, Yet he . . . kny. P.C.

V. 132, gay. P.C.

For the names in this and the foregoing page, see the remarks at the end of the next ballad.

\* A common pleonasm.—See the next poem, Fit 2nd, v. 155. So Harding



Tivydale may carpe off care,  
 Northombarlond may mayk grat mone,  
 For towe such captayns as slayne wear thear,  
 On the March-perti shall never be none.

135

Word ys commen to Edden-burrowe,  
 To Jamy the Skottishe kyng,  
 That dougheti Duglas, Lyff-tenant of the Merches,  
 He lay slean Chyviot with-in.

140

His handdes dyd he weal and wryng,  
 He sayd, "Alas, and woe ys me!"  
 Such another captayn Skotland within,  
 He sayd, y-feth shuld never be.

145

Worde ys commyn to lovly Londone,  
 Till the fourth Harry our kyng,  
 That Lord Persè Leyff-tennante of the Merchis,  
 He lay slayne Chyviat within.

150

"God have merci on his soll," sayd Kyng Harry,  
 "Good Lord, yf thy will it be!  
 I have a hondrith captayns in Ynglonde," he sayd,  
 "As good as ever was hee:  
 But Persè, and I brook my lyffe,  
 Thy deth well quyte shall be."

155

As our noble kyng made his a-vowe,  
 Lyke a noble prince of renowen,  
 For the deth of the Lord Persè  
 He dyd the battel of Hombyll-down:

160

Wher syx and thrittè Skottish knyghtes  
 On a day wear beaten down:  
 Glendale glytteryde on ther armor bryght,  
 Over castill, towar, and town.

V. 136, mon. P.C.

V. 138, non. P.C.

V. 146, ye seth. P.C.

V. 149, cheyff tennante. P.C.

in his *Chronicle*, chap. 140, fol. 148, describing the death of Richard I,  
 says,

He shrove him then unto Abbots thre  
 With great sobbyng . . . and wepyng teares.

So likewise Cavendish, in his *Life of Cardinal Wolsey*, chap. 12, p. 31, 4to  
 "When the Duke heard this, he replied with weeping teares," &c.

This was the hontynge off the Cheviat ; 165  
 That tear begane this spurn :  
 Old men that knowen the grownde well yenoughe,  
 Call it the Battell of Otterburn.

At Otterburn began this spurne  
 Uppon a Monnyn day : 170  
 Ther was the dougghtè Doglas sleane,  
 The Persè never went away.

Ther was never a tym on the March-partes  
 Sen the Doglas and the Persè met,  
 But yt was marvele, and the rede blude ronne not, 175  
 As the reane doys in the stret.

Jhesue Crist our balys bete,  
 And to the blys us brynge!  
 Thus was the hountynge of the Chevyat :  
 God send us all good ending ! 180

\*.\* The style of this and the following ballad is uncommonly rugged and uncouth, owing to their being writ in the very coarsest and broadest northern dialect.

The battle of Hombyll-down, or Humbledon, was fought Sept. 14, 1402 (anno 3 Hen. IV.), wherein the English, under the command of the E. of Northumberland and his son Hotspur, gained a complete victory over the Scots. The village of Humbledon is one mile north-west from Wooller in Northumberland. The battle was fought in the field below the village, near the present turnpike-road, in a spot called ever since *Red-Riggs*. Humbledon is in Glendale Ward, a district so named in this county, and mentioned above in ver. 163.

---

## II.

### The Battle of Otterbourne.

The only battle, wherein an Earl of Douglas was slain fighting with a Percy, was that of Otterbourn, which is the subject of this ballad. It is here related with the allowable partiality of an English poet, and much in the same manner as it is recorded in the English Chronicles. The Scottish writers have, with a partiality at least as excusable, related it no less in their own favour. Luckily we have a very circumstantial narrative of the whole affair from Froissart, a French historian, who appears to be unbiassed. Froissart's relation is prolix ;



I shall therefore give it as abridged by Carte, who has however had recourse to other authorities, and differs from Froissart in some things, which I shall note in the margin.

In the twelfth year of Richard II., 1388, "The Scots taking advantage of the confusions of this nation, and falling with a party into the west Marches, ravaged the country about Carlisle, and carried off 300 prisoners. It was with a much greater force, headed by some of the principal nobility, that, in the beginning of August,<sup>1</sup> they invaded Northumberland; and having wasted part of the county of Durham,<sup>2</sup> advanced to the gates of Newcastle; where, in a skirmish, they took a 'penon' or colours<sup>3</sup> belonging to Henry Lord Percy, surnamed Hotspur, son to the Earl of Northumberland. In their retreat home, they attacked the castle of Otterbourn; and in the evening of August 9 (as the English writers say, or rather, according to Froissart, August 15), after an unsuccessful assault, were surprised in their camp, which was very strong, by Henry, who at the first onset put them into a good deal of confusion. But James Earl of Douglas rallying his men, there ensued one of the best-fought actions that happened in that age; both armies showing the utmost bravery:<sup>4</sup> the Earl Douglas himself being slain on the spot;<sup>5</sup> the Earl of Murrey mortally wounded; and Hotspur<sup>6</sup> with his brother, Ralph Percy, taken prisoners. These disasters on both sides have given occasion to the event of the engagements being disputed: Froissart (who derives his relation from a Scotch knight, two gentlemen of the same country, and as many of Foix<sup>7</sup>) affirming that the Scots remained masters of the field; and the English writers insinuating the contrary. These last maintain that the English had the better of the day; but night

<sup>1</sup> Froissart speaks of both parties (consisting in all of more than 40,000 men) as entering England at the same time; but the greater part by way of Carlisle.

<sup>2</sup> And, according to the ballad, that part of Northumberland called Bamboroughshire, a large tract of land so named from the town and castle of Bamborough, formerly the residence of the Northumbrian kings.

<sup>3</sup> This circumstance is omitted in the ballad. Hotspur and Douglas were two young warriors much of the same age.

<sup>4</sup> Froissart says the English exceeded the Scots in number three to one, but that these had the advantage of the ground, and were also fresh from sleep, while the English were greatly fatigued with their previous march.

<sup>5</sup> By Henry L. Percy according to this ballad, and our old English historians, as Stow, Speed, &c.; but borne down by numbers, if we may believe Froissart.

<sup>6</sup> Hotspur (after a very sharp conflict) was taken prisoner by John Lord Montgomery, whose eldest son, Sir Hugh, was slain in the same action with an arrow, according to Crawford's *Peerage* (and seems also to be alluded to in the foregoing ballad, p. 13), but taken prisoner and exchanged for Hotspur, according to this ballad.

<sup>7</sup> Froissart (according to the Eng. translation) says he had his account from two squires of England, and from a knight and squire of Scotland soon after the battle.



coming on, some of the northern lords, coming with the Bishop of Durham to their assistance, killed many of them by mistake, supposing them to be Scots; and the Earl of Dunbar at the same time falling on another side upon Hotspur, took him and his brother prisoners, and carried them off while both parties were fighting. It is at least certain, that immediately after this battle the Scots engaged in it made the best of their way home; and the same party was taken by the other corps about Carlisle."

Such is the account collected by Carte, in which he seems not to be free from partiality: for prejudice must own that Froissart's circumstantial account carries a great appearance of truth, and he gives the victory to the Scots. He however does justice to the courage of both parties; and represents their mutual generosity in such a light, that the present age might edify by the example. "The Englyshmen on the one partye, and Scottes on the other party, are good men of warre, for whan they mete, there is a hard fighte without sparynge. There is no hoo<sup>8</sup> betwene them as long as spears, swordes, axes, or daggers wyll endure: but lay on eche upon other: and whan they be well beaten, and that the one party hath obtayned the victory, they than glorifye so in their dedes of armes, and are so joyfull, that suche as be taken, they shall be ransomed or they go out of the felde;<sup>9</sup> so that shortly ECHE OF THEM IS SO CONTENTE WITH OTHER, THAT AT THEIR DEPARTYNGE, CURTOYSLY THEY WILL SAYE, GOD THANKE YOU. But in fyghtyng one with another there is no playe, nor sparynge."—Froissart's *Cronycle* (as translated by Sir Johan Bouchier Lord Berners), cap. cxlij.

The following ballad is (in this present edition) printed from an old MS. in the Cotton Library<sup>1</sup> (Cleopatra, c. iv.), and contains many stanzas more than were in the former copy, which was transcribed from a MS. in the Harleian Collection [No. 293, fol. 52]. In the Cotton MS. this poem has no title, but in the Harleian copy it is thus inscribed, "A songe made in R. 2. his tyme of the battele of Otterburne, betweene Lord Henry Percy earle of Northomberlande and the earle Douglas of Scotlande. Anno 1388." But this title is erroneous, and added by some ignorant transcriber of after-times: for, 1. The battle was not fought by the Earl of Northumberland, who was absent, nor is once mentioned in the ballad; but by his son SIR HENRY PERCY, Knt., surnamed HOTSPUR (in those times they did not usually give the title of LORD to an earl's eldest son). 2. Although the battle was fought in Richard II.'s time, the song is evidently of later date, as appears from the poet's quoting the Chronicles in Pt. II. ver. 26; and speaking

<sup>8</sup> So in Langham's letter concerning Q. Elizabeth's entertainment at Killingworth Castle, 1575, 12mo, p. 61, "Heer was no he in devout drinkyng."

<sup>9</sup> i. e. They scorn to take the advantage, or to keep them lingering in long captivity.

<sup>1</sup> The notice of this MS. I must acknowledge, with many other obligations, owing to the friendship of Thomas Tyrwhitt, Esq., late Clerk of the House of Commons



of Percy in the last stanza as dead. It was however written, in all likelihood, as early as the foregoing song, if not earlier; which perhaps may be inferred from the minute circumstances with which the story is related, many of which are recorded in no chronicle, and were probably preserved in the memory of old people. It will be observed, that the authors of these two poems have some lines in common; but which of them was the original proprietor must depend upon their priority; and this the sagacity of the reader must determine.

Yt felle abowght the Lamasse tyde,  
 Whan husbonds wynn ther haye,  
 The dowghtye Dowglasse bowynd hym to ryde,  
 In Ynglond to take a praye:

The Yerlle of Fyffe,<sup>2</sup> withowghten stryffe, 5  
 He bowynd hym over Sulway:<sup>3</sup>  
 The grete wolde ever together ryde;  
 That race they may rue for aye.

Over 'Ottercap' hyll they<sup>4</sup> came in,  
 And so dowyn by Rodelyffe cragge, 10  
 Upon Grene 'Leyton' they lyghted dow;n,  
 Styrande many a stagge:<sup>5</sup>

And boldely brente Northomberlonde,  
 And haryed many a towyn;  
 They dyd ovr Ynglyssh men grete wrange, 15  
 To battell that were not bowyn.

Ver. 2. wynn their heaye. Harl. MS. This is the Northumberland phrase to this day: by which they always express "getting in their hay." The orig. MS. reads here *winn their waye*.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Stuart, second son of K. Robert II.

<sup>3</sup> *i. e.* "Over Solway frith." This evidently refers to the other division of the Scottish army, which came in by way of Carlisle. Bowynd, or bounde him; *i. e.* hied him.—Vide Gloss.

<sup>4</sup> They: *sc.* the Earl of Douglas and his party.—The several stations here mentioned, are well-known places in Northumberland. Ottercap hill is in the Parish of Kirk-Whelpington, in Tynedaleward. Rodeliff- (or as it is more usually pronounced Rodeley-) Cragge is a noted cliff near Rodeley, a small village in the parish of Hartburn, in Morpethward: it lies south-east of Ottercap. Green Leyton is another small village in the same parish of Hartburn, and is south-east of Rodeley.—Both the orig. MSS. read here corruptly, Hoppertop and Lynton.

<sup>5</sup> This line is corrupt in both the MSS. viz. 'Many a styrande stage.'—Stags have been killed within the present century on some of the large wastes in Northumberland.

Than spake a berne upon the bent,  
 Of comforte that was not colde,  
 And sayd, " We have brent Northomberlond,  
 We have all welth in holde. 20

" Now we have haryed all Bamboroweshyre,  
 All the welth in the worlde have wee;  
 I rede we ryde to Newe Castell,  
 So styll and stalwurthlye."

Uppon the morowe, when it was daye, 25  
 The standards schone fulle bryght;  
 To the Newe Castelle the toke the waye,  
 And thether they cam fulle ryght.

Syr Henry Percy laye at the Newe Castelle,  
 I telle yow withowtten drede; 30  
 He had byn a marche-man <sup>6</sup> all hys dayes,  
 And kepte Barwyke upon Twede.

To the Newe Castell when they cam,  
 The Skottes they cryde on hyght,  
 " Syr Harye Percy, and thou byste within, 35  
 Com to the fylde, and fyght:

" For we have brente Northomberlonde,  
 Thy critage good and ryght;  
 And syne my logeyng I have take,  
 With my brande dubbyd many a knyght." 40

Syr Harry Percy cam to the walles,  
 The Skottyssh oste for to se;  
 " And thow hast brente Northomberlond,  
 Full sore it rewyth me.

" Yf thou hast haryed all Bambarowe shyre, 45  
 Thow hast done me grete envye;  
 For the trespasse thow hast me done,  
 The tone of us schall dye."

V. 39, *syne* seems here to mean *since*.

<sup>6</sup> Marche-man, i.e. a scourer of the Marches.



SRI PRATAP COLLEGE LIBRARY.  
SRINAGAR.

THE BATTLE OF OTTERBOURNE.

17

"Where schall I byde the?" sayd the Dowglas,  
"Or where wylte thou come to me?"

50

"At Otterborne in the hygh way,<sup>7</sup>  
Ther maist thou well logeed be.

"The roo full rekeles ther sche rinnes,  
To make the game and glee:  
The fawkon and the fesaunt both,  
Amonge the holtes on 'hee.'

55

"Ther maist thou have thy welth at wyll,  
Well looged ther maist be;  
Yt schall not be long, or I com the tyll,"  
Sayd Syr Harry Percy.

60

"Ther schall I byde the," sayd the Dowglas,  
"By the fayth of my bodye."  
"Thether schall I com," sayd Syr Harry Percy;  
"My trowth I plyght to the."

A pype of wyne he gave them over the walles,  
For soth, as I yow saye;  
Ther he mayd the Douglas drynke,  
And all hys oste that daye.

65

The Dowglas turnyd hym homewarde agayne,  
For soth withowghten naye;  
He tooke his logeyng at Oterborne  
Uppon a Wedyns-day:

70

And ther he pyght hys standerd dowyn,  
Hys gettyng more and lesse,  
And syne he warned hys men to goo  
To chose ther geldyngs gresse.

75

A Skottysse knyght hoved upon the bent,  
A wache I dare well saye:  
So was he ware on the noble Percy  
In the dawnsynge of the daye.

80

V. 53. Roe-bucks were to be found upon the wastes not far from Hexham in the reign of George I.: — Whitfield, Esq., of Whitfield, is said to have destroyed the last of them. V. 56, hys MSS.

V. 77, upon the best bent. MS.

<sup>7</sup> Otterbourn stands near the old Watling-street road, in the parish of VOL. I.

- He prycked to his pavyleon dore,  
 As faste as he myght ronne ;  
 "Awaken, Dowglas," cryed the knyght,  
 "For Hys love, that syttes yn trone.
- "Awaken, Dowglas," cryed the knyght. 85  
 "For thow maiste waken wyth wyne ;  
 Yender have I spyed the prowde Percy,  
 And seven standardes wyth hym."
- "Nay by my trowth," the Douglas sayed, 90  
 "It ys but a fayned taylle ;  
 He durste not loke on my bred banner,  
 For all Ynglonde so haylle.
- "Was I not yesterdaye at the Newe Castell,  
 That stonds so fayre on Tyne ?  
 For all the men that Percy hade, 95  
 He cowde not garre me ones to dyne."
- He stepped owt at hys pavelyon dore,  
 To loke and it were lesse ;  
 "Araye yow, lordyngs, one and all, 100  
 For here bygynnes no peysse.
- "The Yerle of Mentaye,<sup>8</sup> thow arte my eme,  
 The fowarde I gyve to the :  
 The Yerlle of Huntlay, cawte and kene,  
 He schall wyth the be.
- "The Lorde of Bowghan,<sup>9</sup> in armure bryght, 105  
 On the other hand he schall be :  
 Lorde Jhonstone, and Lorde Maxwell,  
 They to schall be with me.
- "Swynton, fayre fylde upon your pryde !  
 To batell make yow bowen, 110  
 Syr Davy Scotte, Syr Walter Stewarde,  
 Syr Jhon of Agurstone."

## A FYTTE.

Elsdon. The Scots were encamped in a grassy plain near the river Read  
 The place where the Scots and English fought is still called Battle-Riggs.

<sup>8</sup> The Earl of Menteith.

<sup>9</sup> The Lord Buchan.



THE Perssy came byfore hys oste,  
 Wych was ever a gentyll knyght,  
 Upon the Dowglas lowde can he crye,  
 "I wyll holde that I have hyght:

"For thow haste brente Northumberlonde,  
 And done me grete envye;  
 For thys trespasse thou hast me done,  
 The tone of us schall dye."

The Dowglas answerde hym agayne  
 With grete wurdz up on 'hee,'  
 And sayd, "I have twenty agaynst 'thy' one,<sup>1</sup>  
 Byholde, and thow maiste see."

Wyth that the Percy was grevyd sore,  
 For sothe as I yow saye;  
<sup>2</sup>[He lyghted downyn upon his fote,  
 And schoote his horsse clene away.

Every man sawe that he dyd soo,  
 That ryall was ever in rowght;  
 Every man schoote hys horsse him froo,  
 And lyght him rowynde abowght.

Thus Syr Hary Percy toke the fylde,  
 For soth, as I yow saye:  
 Jesu Cryste in hevyn on hyght  
 Dyd helpe hym well that daye.

But nyne thowzand, ther was no moo,  
 The cronykle wyll not layne;  
 Forty thowsande Skottes and fowre  
 That day fowght them agayne.

But when the batell byganne to joyne,  
 In hast ther came a knyght;  
 'Then' letters fayre furth hath he tayne  
 And thus he sayd full ryght:

V. 1, 13, Percy, al. MS.  
 promised. Ver. 10, hys. MSS.

V. 4, I will hold to what I have  
 Ver. 11, the one. MS.

<sup>1</sup> He probably magnifies his strength, to induce him to surrender.  
<sup>2</sup> All that follows, included in brackets, was not in the first edition.

“ My Lorde, your father he gretes yow well,  
Wyth many a noble knyght ;  
He desyres yow to byde  
That he may see thys fyght. 35

“ The Baron of Grastoke ys com owt of the west,  
Wyth hym a noble companye ;  
All they loge at your fathers thys nyght,  
And the battel fayne wold they see.” 40

“ For Jesu’s love,” sayd Syr Harye Percy,  
“ That dyed for yow and me,  
Wende to my lorde my father agayne,  
And saye thow saw me not with yee.

“ My trowth ys plyght to yonne Skottysch knyght, 45  
It nedes me not to layne,  
That I schulde byde hym upon thys bent,  
And I have hys trowth agayne :

“ And if that I wende off thys grownde,  
For soth, unfoughten awaye, 50  
He wolde me call but a kowarde knyght  
In hys londe another daye.

“ Yet had I lever to be rynde and rente,  
By Mary, that mykel maye,  
Then ever my manhod schulde be reprovdy 55  
Wyth a Skotte another daye.

“ Wherfore schote, archars, for my sake,  
And let scharpe arowes flee ;  
Mynstrells, playe up for your waryson,  
And well quyt it schall be. 60

“ Every man thynke on hys trewe love,  
And marke hym to the Trenite :  
For to God I make myne avowe  
Thys day wyll I not fle.”

The blodye harte in the Dowglas armes, 65  
Hys standerde stode on hye ;  
That every man myght full well knowe ;  
By syde stode starres thre.



The whyte lyon on the Ynglysh parte,  
 Forsoth, as I yow sayne, 70  
 The lucetts and the cressawnts both;  
 The Skotts faught them agayne.<sup>3</sup>]

Uppon Sent Andrewe lowde cane they crye,  
 And thrysse they schowte on hyght,  
 And syne marked them one ovr Ynglysshe men, 75  
 As I have tolde yow ryght.

Sent George the bryght, ovr ladyes knyght,  
 To name they<sup>4</sup> were full fayne;  
 Ovr Ynglysshe men they cryde on hyght  
 And thrysse the schowtte agayne. 80

Wyth that, scharpe arowes bygan to flee,  
 I tell yow in sertayne;  
 Men of armes byganne to joyne,  
 Many a dowghty man was ther slayne.

The Percy and the Dowglas mette, 85  
 That ether of other was fayne;  
 They schapped together, whyll that the swette,  
 With swords of fyne Collayne;

Tyll the bloode from ther bassonetts ranne  
 As the roke doth in the rayne; 90  
 "Yelde the to me," sayd the Dowglàs,  
 "Or ells thow schalt be slayne;

"For I see by thy bryght bassonet,  
 Thow arte sum man of myght;  
 And so I do by thy burnysshed brande, 95  
 Thow art an yerle, or ells a knyght."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The arms of Douglas are pretty accurately emblazoned in the former stanza, especially if the readings were, *The crowned harte*, and *Above stode starres thre*, it would be minutely exact at this day. As for the Percy family, one of their ancient badges or cognizances was a *white lyon*, statant; and the *silver crescent* continues to be used by them to this day: they also give *three luces argent* for one of their quarters.

<sup>4</sup> i. e. The English.

<sup>5</sup> Being all in armour, he could not know him.

“ By my good faytle,” sayd the noble Percy,  
 “ Now haste thou rede full ryght;  
 Yet wyll I never yelde me to the,  
 Whyll I may stonde and fyght.” 100

They swapped together, whyll that they swette,  
 Wyth swordes scharpe and long;  
 Ych on other so faste they beette,  
 Tyll ther helmes cam in peyses dowyn.

The Percy was a man of strenghth, 105  
 I tell yow in thys stounde;  
 He smote the Dowglas at the swordes length,  
 That he felle to the growynde.

The sworde was scharpe, and sore can byte,  
 I tell yow in sertayne; 110  
 To the harte he cowde hym smyte,  
 Thus was the Dowglas slayne.

The stonders stode styll on eke syde,  
 With many a grevous grone;  
 Ther the fowght the day, and all the nyght, 115  
 And many a dowghty man was ‘ slone.’

Ther was no freke that ther wold flye,  
 But styffly in stowre can stond,  
 Ychone hewyng on other whyll they myght drye,  
 Wyth many a bayllefull bronde. 120

Ther was slayne upon the Skottes syde,  
 For soth and sertenly,  
 Syr James a Dowglas ther was slayne,  
 That daye that he cowde dye.

The Yerlle of Mentayne he was slayne, 125  
 Grysely groned uppon the growynd;  
 Syr Davy Scotte, Syr Walter Steward,  
 Syr ‘ John ’ of Agurstonne.<sup>6</sup>

V. 116, slayne. MSS.

V. 124, i. e. he died that day.

<sup>6</sup> Our old minstrel repeats these names, as Homer and Virgil do those of their heroes :

—fortemque Gyan, fortemque Cloanthum, &c. &c.

Both the MSS. read here, “ Sir James : ” but see above, Pt. 1, ver. 112.



Syr Charles Morrey in that place  
 That never a fote wold flye ;  
 Sir Hughe Maxwell, a lorde he was,  
 With the Dowglas dyd he dye. 130

Ther was slayne upon the Skottes syde,  
 For soth as I yow saye,  
 Of fowre and forty thowsande Scotts  
 Went but eyghtene awaye. 135

Ther was slayne upon the Ynglysshe syde,  
 For soth and sertenlye,  
 A gentell knyght, Sir John Fitz-hughe,  
 Yt was the more petye. 140

Syr James Harebotell ther was slayne,  
 For hym ther hartes were sore ;  
 The gentyll ' Lovelle ' ther was slayne,  
 That the Percyes standerd bore.

Ther was slayne uppon the Ynglyssh perte,  
 For soth as I yow saye,  
 Of nyne thowsand Ynglyssh men  
 Fyve hondert cam awaye. 145

The other were slayne in the fylde,  
 Cryste kepe ther sowles from wo,  
 Seyng ther was so fewe fryndes  
 Agaynst so many a foo. 150

Then one the morne they mayd them beeres  
 Of byrch, and haysell graye ;  
 Many a wydowe with wepyng teyres  
 Ther makes they fette awaye. 155

Thys fraye bygan at Otterborne  
 Bytwene the nyght and the day ;  
 Ther the Dowglas lost hys lyfe,  
 And the Percy was lede awaye.<sup>7</sup> 160

V. 143, Covelle. MS. For the names in this page, see the remarks at the end of this ballad. V. 153, one, *i. e.* on.

<sup>7</sup> *Sc. captive.*

Then was ther a Scottyshe prisoner tayne,  
 Syr Hughe Montgomery was hys name ;  
 For soth as I yow saye,  
 He borrowed the Percy home agayne.<sup>8</sup>

Now let us all for the Percy praye  
 To Jesu most of myght,  
 To bryng hys sowle to the blysse of heven,  
 For he was a gentyll knyght.

165

V. 165, Percyes. Harl. MS.

<sup>8</sup> In the Cotton MS. is the following note on ver. 164, in an ancient hand :  
 —“Syr Hewe Montgomery takyn prizonar, was delyvered for the restorynge  
 of Perssy.”

\* \* Most of the names in the two preceding ballads are found to  
 have belonged to families of distinction in the North, as may be made  
 appear from authentic records. Thus, in

#### THE ANCIENT BALLAD OF CHEVY-CHASE.

Page 10, ver. 112. *Agerstone*.] The family of Haggerston of Haggerston, near Berwick, has been seated there for many centuries, and still remains. Thomas Haggerston was among the commissioners returned for Northumberland in 12 Hen. VI. 1433 (Fuller's *Worthies*, p. 310). The head of this family at present is Sir Thomas Haggerston, Bart., of Haggerston above mentioned.

N.B. The name is spelt Agerstone, as in the text, in Leland's *Itinerary*, vol. vii. p. 54.

Ver. 113. *Hartly*.] Hartly is a village near the sea, in the barony of Tinemouth, about seven miles from North-Shields. It probably gave name to a family of note at that time.

Ver. 114. *Heurone*.] This family, one of the most ancient, was long of great consideration in Northumberland. Haddeston, the *Caput Baronie* of Heron, was their ancient residence. It descended, 25 Edw. I., to the heir general, Emeline Heron, afterwards Baroress Darcy. —Ford, &c., and Bockenfield (*in com. eodem*), went at the same time to Roger Heron, the heir male, whose descendants were summoned to Parliament: Sir William Heron of Ford Castle being summoned 44 Edw. III. —Ford Castle hath descended by heirs general to the family of Delaval (mentioned in the next article). Robert Heron, Esq., who died at Newark in 1753 (father of the Right Hon. Sir Richard Heron, Bart.), was heir male of the Herons of Bockenfield, a younger branch of this family. Sir Thomas Heron Middleton, Bart., is heir male of the Herons of Chip-Chase, another branch of the Herons of Ford Castle.

Ver. 115. *Lavele*.] Joh. de Lavale, miles, was sheriff of Northumberland 34 Hen. VII. Joh. de Lavele, mil. in the 1 Ed. VI and



afterwards (Fuller 313). In Nicholson this name is spelt Da Lovel, p. 304. This seems to be the ancient family of Delaval, of Seaton Delaval, in Northumberland, whose ancestor was one of the twenty-five barons appointed to be guardians of Magna Charta.

Ver. 117. *Rugbè.*] The ancient family of Rokeby in Yorkshire seems to be here intended. In Thoresby's *Ducat. Leod.* p. 253, fol., is a genealogy of this house, by which it appears that the head of the family about the time when this ballad was written was Sir Ralph Rokeby, Knt., Ralph being a common name of the Rokebys.

Ver. 119. *Wetharryngton.*] Rog. de Widrington was sheriff of Northumberland in 36 of Edw. III. (Fuller, p. 311). Joh. de Widrington in 11 of Hen. IV., and many others of the same name afterwards. —See also Nicholson, p. 331. Of this family was the late Lord Witherington.

Ver. 124. *Mongon-byrry.*] Sir Hugh Montgomery was son of John Lord Montgomery, the lineal ancestor of the present Earl of Eglinton.

Ver. 125. *Liddale.*] The ancient family of the Liddels were originally from Scotland, where they were Lords of Liddel Castle, and of the Barony of Buff (vide Collins's *Peerage*). The head of this family is the present Lord Ravensworth, of Ravensworth Castle, in the county of Durham.

IN THE BATTLE OF OTTERBOURNE.

Page 18, ver. 101. *Mentaye.*] At the time of this battle, the earldom of Menteith was possessed by Robert Stewart, Earl of Fife, third son of K. Robert II., who, according to Buchanan, commanded the Scots that entered by Carlisle. But our minstrel had probably an eye to the family of Graham, who had this earldom when the ballad was written.—See Douglas's *Peerage of Scotland*, 1764, fol.

Ver. 103. *Huntlay.*] This shows this ballad was not composed before 1449; for in that year Alexander, Lord of Gordon and Huntley, was created Earl of Huntley by K. James II.

Ver. 105. *Bowghan.*] The Earl of Buchan at that time was Alexander Stewart, fourth son of K. Robert II.

Ver. 107. *Jhonstone—Maxwell.*] These two families of Johnston Lord of Johnston, and Maxwell Lord of Maxwell, were always very powerful on the borders. Of the former family is Johnston Marquis of Annandale: of the latter is Maxwell Earl of Nithsdale. I cannot find that any chief of this family was named Sir Hugh; but Sir Herbert Maxwell was about this time much distinguished.—See Doug. This might have been originally written Sir H. Maxwell, and by transcribers converted into Sir Hugh.—See above, in No. I. v. 90, *Richard* is contracted into *Ric*.

Ver. 109. *Swynton.*] *i. e.* The Laird of Swintone, a small village within the Scottish border, three miles from Norham. This family still subsists, and is very ancient.

Ver. 111. *Scotte.*] The illustrious family of Scot, ancestors of the Duke of Buccleugh, always made a great figure on the borders. Sir Walter Scot was at the head of this family when the battle was



fought; but his great-grandson, Sir David Scot, was the hero of that house when the ballad was written.

Ibid. *Stewarde.*] The person here designed was probably Sir Walter Stewart, Lord of Dalswinton and Gairlies, who was eminent at that time.—See Doug. From him is descended the present Earl of Galloway.

Ver. 112. *Agurstone.*] The seat of this family was sometimes subject to the kings of Scotland. Thus Richardus Hagerstoun, miles, is one of the Scottish knights who signed a treaty with the English in 1249. Hen. III. (Nicholson, p. 2. note.) It was the fate of many parts of Northumberland often to change their masters, according as the Scottish or English arms prevailed.

Page 23, ver. 129. *Morrey.*] The person here meant was probably Sir Charles Murray of Cockpoole, who flourished at that time, and was ancestor of the Murrays sometime Earls of Annandale.—See Doug. *Peerage.*

Page 23, ver. 139. *Fitz-hu he.*] Dugdale (in his Baron. vol. i. p. 403) informs us, that John, son of Henry Lord Fitz-hugh, was killed at the battle of Otterbourne. This was a Northumberland family.—Vide Dugd. p. 403, col. 1, and Nicholson, pp. 33, 60.

Ver. 141. *Harebotell.*] Harbottle is a village upon the river Coquet, about ten miles west of Rothbury. The family of Harbottle was once considerable in Northumberland.—See Fuller, pp. 312, 313. A daughter of Sir Guischard Harbottle, Knt., married Sir Thomas Percy, Knt., son of Henry V., and father of Thomas, seventh Earl of Northumberland.



### III.

#### The Jew's Daughter,

A SCOTTISH BALLAD,

is founded upon the supposed practice of the Jews in crucifying or otherwise murdering Christian children, out of hatred to the religion of their parents: a practice which hath been always alleged in excuse for the cruelties exercised upon that wretched people, but which probably never happened in a single instance. For if we consider, on the one hand, the ignorance and superstition of the times when such stories took their rise, the virulent prejudices of the monks who record them, and the eagerness with which they would be caught up by the barbarous populace as a pretence for plunder; on the other hand, the great danger incurred by the perpetrators, and the inadequate motives they could have to excite them to a crime of so much horror, we may reasonably conclude the whole charge to be groundless and malicious.

The following ballad is probably built upon some Italian legend, and bears a great resemblance to the *Prioress's Tale* in Chaucer: the poet seems also to have had an eye to the known story of *Hugh of Lincoln*.



a child said to have been there murdered by the Jews in the reign of Henry III. The conclusion of this ballad appears to be wanting: what it probably contained may be seen in Chaucer. As for Mirryland Toun, it is probably a corruption of Milan (called by the Dutch Meylandt) Town: the Pa is evidently the river Po; although the Adige, not the Po, runs through Milan.

Printed from a MS. copy sent from Scotland.

THE rain rins down through Mirry-land toune,

Sae dois it doune the Pa:

Sae dois the lads of Mirry-land toune,

Quhan they play at the ba'.

Than out and cam the Jewis dochtèr,

Said, "Will ye cum in and dine?"

"I winnae cum in, I cannae cum in,

Without my play-feres nine."

Scho powd an apple reid and white,

To intice the zong thing in:

Scho powd an apple white and reid,

And that the sweit bairne did win.

And scho has taine out a little pen-knife,

And low down by her gair;

Scho has twin'd the zong thing and his life;

A word he nevir spak mair.

And out and cam the thick, thick bluid,

And out and cam the thin;

And out and cam the bonny herts bluid:

Thair was nae life left in.

Scho laid him on a dressing borde,

And drest him like a swine,

And laughing said, "Gae nou and pley

With zour sweit play-feres nine."

Scho rowd him in a cake of lead,

Bade him lie stil and sleip;

Scho cast him in a deip draw-well,

Was fifty fadom deip.

V. 1. It is important to note that Mirry-land toune is a corruption of Merry Lincoln, and not, as Percy conjectured, of Mailand (Milan) town.—  
*Editor.*

Quhan bells wer rung, and mass was sung.  
 And every lady went hame : 30  
 Than ilka lady had her zong sonne,  
 Bot Lady Helen had none.  
 Scho rowd hir mantil hir about,  
 And sair, sair gan she weip,  
 And she ran into the Jewis castèl, 35  
 Quhan they were all asleip.  
 “ My bonny Sir Hew, my pretty Sir Hew  
 I pray thee to me speik : ”  
 “ O lady, rinn to the deip draw-well,  
 Gin ze zour zonne wad seik.” 40  
 Lady Helen ran to the deip draw-well,  
 And knelt upon her kne :  
 “ My bonny Sir Hew, an ze be here,  
 I pray thee speik to me.”  
 “ The lead is wondrous heavy, mither, 45  
 The well is wondrous deip ;  
 A keen pen-knife sticks in my hert,  
 A word I dounae speik.  
 “ Gae hame, gae hame, my mithor deir,  
 Fetch me my windling sheet, 50  
 And at the back o’ Mirry-land toun  
 Its thair we twa sall meet.’

\* \* \* \* \*



#### IV.

#### Sir Cauline.

This old romantic tale was preserved in the Editor's folio MS., but in so very defective and mutilated a condition (not from any chasm in the MS., but from great omission in the transcript, probably copied from the faulty recitation of some illiterate minstrel), that it was necessary to supply several stanzas in the first part, and still more in the second, to connect and complete the story in the manner which appeared to him most interesting and affecting.

There is something peculiar in the metre of this old ballad: it is not unusual to meet with redundant stanzas of six lines; but the



occasional insertion of a double third or fourth line, as ver. 31, 44, &c., is an irregularity I do not remember to have seen elsewhere.

It may be proper to inform the reader before he comes to Pt. 2, v. 110, 111, that the ROUND TABLE was not peculiar to the reign of K. Arthur, but was common in all the ages of chivalry. The proclaiming a great tournament (probably with some peculiar solemnities) was called "holding a Round Table." Dugdale tells us, that the great baron Roger de Mortimer "having procured the honour of knighthood to be conferred 'on his three sons' by K. Edw. I., he, at his own costs, caused a tourneament to be held at Kenilworth; where he sumptuously entertained an hundred knights, and as many ladies, for three days; the like whereof was never before in England; and there began the ROUND TABLE (so called by reason that the place wherein they practised those feats was environed with a strong wall made in a round form). And upon the fourth day, the golden lion, in sign of triumph, being yielded to him, he carried it (with all the company) to Warwick."—It may further be added, that Matthew Paris frequently calls jousts and tournaments *Hastiludia Mensæ Rotundæ*.

As to what will be observed in this ballad of the art of healing being practised by a young princess, it is no more than what is usual in all the old romances, and was conformable to real manners: it being a practice derived from the earliest times among all the Gothic and Celtic nations, for women, even of the highest rank, to exercise the art of surgery. In the *Northern Chronicles* we always find the young damsels stanching the wounds of their lovers, and the wives those of their husbands.<sup>1</sup> And even so late as the time of Q. Elizabeth, it is mentioned among the accomplishments of the ladies of her court, that the "eldest of them are *skilful in surgery*."—See Harrison's *Description of England*, prefixed to Holingshed's Chronicle, &c.

#### THE FIRST PART.

In Ireland, ferr over the sea,  
There dwelleth a bonnye kinge;  
And with him a yong and comlye knighte,  
Men call him Syr Cauline.

The kinge had a ladye to his daughter,  
In fashyon she hath no peere;  
And princely wightes that ladye wooed  
To be theyr wedded feere.

Syr Cauline loveth her best of all,  
But nothing durst he saye;  
Ne descreeve his counsayl to no man,  
But deerlye he lovde this may.

5

10

<sup>1</sup> See *Northern Antiquities*, &c., vol. i. p. 318; vol. ii. p. 100; *Mémoires de la Chevalerie*, tom. i. p. 44.

- Till on a daye it so beffell  
Great dill to him was dight ;  
The maydens love removde his mynd, 15  
To care-bed went the knighte.
- One while he spred his armes him fro,  
One while he spred them nye :  
“ And aye ! but I winne that ladyes love,  
For dole now I mun dye.” 20
- And whan our parish-masse was done,  
Our kinge was bowne to dyne :  
He says, “ Where is Syr Cauline,  
That is wont to serve the wyne ?”
- Then aunswerde him a courteous knighte, 25  
And fast his handes gan wringe :  
“ Syr Cauline is sicke, and like to dye,  
Without a good leechinge.”
- “ Fetche me downe my daughter deere,  
She is a leech fulle fine ; 30  
Goe take him doughe, and the baken bread,  
And serve him with the wyne soe red :  
Lothe I were him to tine.”
- Fair Christabelle to his chaumber goes,  
Her maydens followyng nye : 35  
“ O well,” she sayth, “ how doth my lord ?”  
“ O sicke, thou fayr ladyè.”
- “ Nowe ryse up wightlye, man, for shame,  
Never lye soe cowardlee ;  
For it is told in my fathers halle, 40  
You dye for love of mec.”
- “ Fayre ladye, it is for your love  
That all this dill I drye :  
For if you wold comfort me with a kisse,  
Then were I brought from bale to blisse, 45  
No lenger wold I lye.”
- “ Syr Knighte, my father is a kinge,  
I am his onlye heire ;  
Alas ! and well you knowe, Syr Knighte,  
I never can be youre fere.” 50



"O ladye, thou art a kinges daughter,  
And I am not thy peere;  
But let me doe some deedes of armes  
To be your bacheleere."

"Some deedes of armes if thou wilt doe,  
My bacheleere to bee,  
(But ever and aye my heart wold rue,  
Giff harm shold happe to thee,)"

"Upon Eldridge hill there groweth a thorne,  
Upon the mores brodinge;  
And dare ye, Syr Knighte, wake there all nighte,  
Untill the fayre morninge?"

"For the Eldridge knighte, so mickle of mighte,  
Will examine you beforne;  
And never man bare life awaye,  
But he did him scath and scorne."

"That knighte he is a foul paynim,  
And large of limb and bone;  
And but if heaven may be thy speede,  
Thy life it is but gone."

"Nowe on the Eldridge hilles Ile walke,<sup>2</sup>  
For thy sake, fair ladie;  
And Ile either bring you a ready token,  
Or Ile never more you see."

The lady is gone to her own chaumbère,  
Her maydens following bright;  
Syr Cauline lope from care-bed soone,  
And to the Eldridge hills is gone,  
For to wake there all night.

Unto midnight, that the moone did rise,  
He walked up and downe;  
Then a lightsome bugle heard he blowe  
Over the bents soe browne:  
Quoth hee, "If cryance come till my heart,  
I am ffar from any good towne."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps wake, as in ver. 61.

<sup>3</sup> This line is restored from the folio MS

And soone he spyde on the mores so broad  
 A furyous wight and fell ;  
 A ladye bright his brydle led,  
 Clad in a fayre kyrtell :

And soe fast he called on Syr Cauline, 90  
 " O man, I rede thee flye,  
 For, ' but ' if cryance come till thy heart,  
 I weene but thou mun dye."

He sayth, " ' No ' cryance comes till my heart, 95  
 Nor, in faith, I wyll not flee ;  
 For, cause thou minged not Christ before,  
 The less me dreadeth thee."

The Eldridge knight, he pricked his steed ;  
 Syr Cauline bold abode : 100  
 Then either shooke his trustye speare,  
 And the timber these two children <sup>4</sup> bare  
 Soe soone in sunder slode.

Then tooke they out theyr two good swordes,  
 And layden on full faste,  
 Till helme and hawberke, mail and sheelde, 105  
 They all were well-nye brast.

The Eldridge knight was mickle of might,  
 And stiffe in stower did stande ;  
 But Syr Cauline with a ' backward ' stroke,  
 He smote off his right-hand ; 110  
 That soone he, with paine and lacke of bloud,  
 Fell downe on that lay-land.

Then up Syr Cauline lift his brande  
 All over his head so hye :  
 " And here I sweare by the holy roode, 115  
 Nowe, caytiffe, thou shalt dye."

Then up and came that ladye brighte,  
 Faste wringing of her hande :  
 " For the maydens love that most you love, 120  
 Withhold that deadlye brande :

V. 109, aukeward. MS.

i.e. Knights.—See the preface to *Child Waters*, ol. ii.



“ For the maydens love that most you love,  
Now smyte no more I praye ;  
And aye whatever thou wilt, my lord,  
He shall thy hests obaye.”

“ Now sweare to mee, thou Eldridge knighte, 125  
And here on this lay-land,  
That thou wilt believe on Christ his laye,  
And therto plight thy hand :

“ And that thou never on Eldridge come 130  
To sporte, gamon, or playe ;  
And that thou here give up thy armes  
Until thy dying daye.”

The Eldridge knighte gave up his armes  
With many a sorrowfulle sighe ;  
And sware to obey Syr Caulines hest, 135  
Till the tyme that he shold dye.

And he then up and the Eldridge knighte  
Sett him in his saddle anone ;  
And the Eldridge knighte and his ladye,  
To theyr castle are they gone. 140

Then he tooke up the bloudy hand,  
That was so large of bone,  
And on it he founde five ringes of gold  
Of knightes that had be slone.

Then he tooke up the Eldridge sworde. 145  
As hard as any flint :  
And he tooke off those ringes five,  
As bright as fyre and brent.

Home then pricked Syr Cauline,  
As light as leafe on tree ; 150  
I-wys he neither stint ne blanne,  
Till he his ladye see.

Then downe he knelt upon his knee,  
Before that lady gay :  
“ O ladye, I have bin on the Eldridge hills : 155  
These tokens I bring away ”

“ Now welcome, welcome, Syr Cauline,  
 Thrice welcome unto mee,  
 For now I perceive thou art a true knighte,  
 Of valour bolde and free.” 160

“ O ladye, I am thy own true knighte,  
 Thy hests for to obaye;  
 And mought I hope to winne thy love! ”——  
 No more his tonge colde say.

The ladye blushed scarlette redde, 165  
 And fette a gentill sighe:  
 “ Alas! Syr Knight, how may this bee,  
 For my degree’s soe highe?

“ But sith thou hast hight, thou comely youth,  
 To be my batchilere, 170  
 Ile promise, if thee I may not wedde,  
 I will have none other fere.”

Then shee held forth her lilly-white hand  
 Towards that knighte so free;  
 He gave to it one gentill kisse, 175  
 His heart was brought from bale to blisse,  
 The teares sterte from his ee.

“ But keep my counsayl, Syr Cauline,  
 Ne let no man it knowe;  
 For, and ever my father sholde it ken, 180  
 I wot he wolde us sloe.”

From that daye forth, that ladye fayre  
 Lovde Syr Cauline the knighte:  
 From that daye forth, he only joyde  
 Whan shee was in his sight. 185

Yea, and oftentimes they mette  
 Within a fayre arboùre,  
 Where they, in love and sweet daliaunce,  
 Past manye a pleasaunt houre.

\* \* \* In this conclusion of the First Part, and at the beginning of the Second, the reader will observe a resemblance to the story of *Sigismunda and Guiscard*, as told by Boccace and Dryden: see the latter’s description of the lovers meeting in the cave, and those



beautiful lines which contain a reflection so like this of our poet,  
 "everye white," &c. viz.—

"But as extremes are short of ill and good,  
 And tides at highest mark regorge their flood;  
 So Fate, that could no more improve their joy,  
 Took a malicious pleasure to destroy.  
 Tancered, who fondly loved," &c.

## PART THE SECOND.

EVERYE white will have its blacke,  
 And everye sweete its sowre:  
 This founde the Ladye Christabelle  
 In an untimely howre.

For so it befelle, as Syr Cauline  
 Was with that ladye faire,  
 The kinge, her father, walked forthe  
 To take the evenyng aire:

5

And into the arboure as he went  
 To rest his wearye feet,  
 He found his daughter and Syr Cauline  
 There sette in daliaunce sweet.

10

The kinge hee sterted forthe, i-wys,  
 And an angrye man was hee:  
 "Nowe, traytoure, thou shalt hange or drawe,  
 And rewe shall thy ladiè."

15

Then forthe Syr Cauline he was ledde,  
 And throwne in dungeon deepe:  
 And the ladye into a towre so hye,  
 There left to wayle and weepe.

20

The queene she was Syr Caulines friend,  
 And to the kinge sayd shee:  
 "I praye you save Syr Caulines life,  
 And let him banisht bee."

"Now, dame, that traitor shall be sent  
 Across the salt sea fome:

25

But here I will make thee a band,  
 If ever he come within this land,  
 A foule deathe is his doome."

- All woe-begone was that gentil knight 30  
To parte from his ladyè ;  
And many a time he sighed sore,  
And cast a wistfulle eye :  
“ Faire Christabelle, from thee to parte, 35  
Farre lever had I dye.”
- Faire Christabelle, that ladye bright,  
Was had forth of the towre ;  
But ever shee droopeth in her minde,  
As, nipt by an ungentle winde, 40  
Doth some faire lillye flowre.
- And ever shee doth lament and weepe  
To tint her lover soe :  
“ Syr Cauline, thou little think'st on mee,  
But I will still be true.”
- Manye a kinge, and manye a duke, 45  
And lorde of high degree,  
Did sue to that fayre ladye of love ;  
But never shee wolde them nee.
- When manye a daye was past and gone, 50  
Ne comforte she colde finde,  
The kynge proclaimed a tourneament,  
To cheere his daughters mind.
- And there came lords, and there came knights,  
Fro manye a farre countryè. 55  
To break a spere for theyr ladyes love,  
Before that faire ladyè.
- And many a ladye there was sette,  
In purple and in palle ;  
But faire Christabelle, soe woe-begone, 60  
Was the fayrest of them all.
- Then manye a knyghte was mickle of might,  
Before his ladye gaye ;  
But a stranger wight, whom no man knewe,  
He wan the prize eche daye.



His acton it was all of blacke,  
 His hewberke and his sheelde;  
 Ne noe man wist whence he did come,  
 Ne noe man knewe where he did gone,  
 When they came out the feelde.

65

And now three days were prestlye past  
 In feates of chivalrye,  
 When lo, upon the fourth morninge,  
 A sorrowfulle sight they see:

70

A hugye giaunt stiffe and starke,  
 All foule of limbe and lere,  
 Two goggling eyen like fire farden,  
 A mouthe from eare to eare.

75

Before him came a dwarffe full lowe,  
 That waited on his knee;  
 And at his backe five heads he bare,  
 All wan and pale of blee.

80

"Sir," quoth the dwarffe, and louted lowe,  
 "Behold that hend Soldàin!  
 Behold these heads I beare with me!  
 They are kings which he hath slain.

85

"The Eldridge knight is his own cousine,  
 Whom a knight of thine hath shent:  
 And hee is come to avenge his wrong:  
 And to thee, all thy knightes among,  
 Defiance here hath sent.

90

"But yette he will appease his wrath,  
 Thy daughters love to winne;  
 And, but thou yeelde him that fayre mayd,  
 Thy halls and towers must brenne.

"Thy head, Syr King, must goe with mee,  
 Or else thy daughter deere;  
 Or else within these lists soe broad,  
 Thou must finde him a peere."

95

The king he turned him round aboute,  
 And in his heart was woe.

100

"Is there never a knighte of my round tablè  
 This matter will undergoe?"

“ Is there never a knyghte amongst yee all  
Will fight for my daughter and mee ?  
Whoever will fight yon grimme Soldàn,  
Right fair his meede shall bee. 105

“ For hee shall have my broad lay-lands,  
And of my crowne be heyre ;  
And he shall winne faire Christabelle  
To be his wedded fere.” 110

But every knyghte of his round tablè  
Did stand both still and pale ;  
For, whenever they lookt on the grim Soldàn,  
It made their hearts to quail.

All woe-begone was that fayre ladyè, 115  
When she sawe no helpe was nye ;  
She cast her thought on her owne true-love,  
And the teares gusht from her eye.

Up then sterte the stranger knyghte,  
Sayd, “ Ladye, be not affrayd ; 120  
Ile fight for thee with this grimme Soldàn,  
Thoughe he be unmacklye made.

“ And if thou wilt lend me the Eldridge sworde,  
That lyeth within thy bowre,  
I truste in Christe for to slay this fiende, 125  
Thoughe he be stiff in stowre.”

“ Goe fetch him downe the Eldridge sworde,”  
The kinge he cryde, “ with speede :  
Nowe heaven assist thee, courteous knyghte ;  
My daughter is thy meede.” 130

The gyaunt he stepped into the lists,  
And sayd, “ Awaye, awaye :  
I sweare, as I am the hend Soldàn,  
Thou lettest me here all daye.”

Then forthe the stranger knight he came, 135  
In his blacke armour dight :  
The ladye sighed a gentle sighe,  
“ That this were my true knyghte ! ”



- And nowe the gyaunt and knighte be mett  
Within the lists soe broad ;  
And now, with swordes soe sharpe of steele,  
They gan to lay on load. 140
- The Soldan strucke the knighte a stroke,  
That made him reele asyde :  
Then woe-begone was that fayre ladyè,  
And thrice she deeply sighde. 145
- The Soldan strucke a second stroke,  
And made the bloude to flowe :  
All pale and wan was that ladye fayre,  
And thrice she wept for woe. 150
- The Soldan strucke a third fell stroke,  
Which brought the knighte on his knee :  
Sad sorrow pierced that ladyes heart,  
And she shriekt loud shriekings three.
- The knighte he leapt upon his feete,  
All recklesse of the pain :  
Quoth hee, " But heaven be now my speede,  
Or else I shall be slaine." 155
- He grasped his sworde with mayne and mighte,  
And spying a secrette part,  
He drave it into the Soldan's syde,  
And pierced him to the heart. 160
- Then all the people gave a shoute,  
Whan they sawe the Soldan falle :  
The ladye wept, and thanked Christ  
That had reskewed her from thrall. 165
- And nowe the kinge, with all his barons,  
Rose uppe from offe his seate,  
And downe he stepped intò the listes  
That curteous knighte to greete. 170
- But he, for payne and lacke of bloude,  
Was fallen intò a swounde,  
And there, all walteringe in his gore,  
Lay lifelesse on the grounde.

- “Come downe, come downe, my daughter deare,  
Thou art a leech of skille;  
Farre lever had I lose halfe my landes,  
Than this good knight sholde spille.” 175
- Downe then steppeth that fayre ladye,  
To helpe him if she maye: 180  
But when she did his beavere raise,  
“It is my life, my lord,” she sayes,  
And shriekte and swound awaye.
- Syr Cauline juste lifte up his eyes,  
When he hearde his ladye crye: 185  
“O ladye, I am thine owne true love;  
For thee I wisht to dye.”
- Then giving her one partinge looke,  
He closed his eyes in death  
Ere Christabelle, that ladye milde, 190  
Begane to drawe her breathe.
- But when she found her comelye knight  
Indeed was dead and gone,  
She layde her pale, cold checke to his,  
And thus she made her moane: 195
- “O staye, my deare and onlye lord,  
For mee, thy faithfulle fcere;  
’Tis meet that I shold followe thee,  
Who hast bought my love so deare.”
- Then fayntinge in a deadlye swoune, 200  
And with a deep-fette sighe,  
That burst her gentle heart in twayne,  
Faire Christabelle did dye.
-



## V.

## Edward, Edward.

## A SCOTTISH BALLAD.

FROM A MS. COPY TRANSMITTED FROM SCOTLAND.

- "QUHY dois zour brand sae drop wi' bluid,  
     Edward, Edward?  
 Quhy dois zour brand sae drop wi' bluid?  
     And quhy sae sad gang zee, O?"  
 "O, I hae killed my hauke sae guid,  
     Mither, mither:  
 O, I hae killed my hauke sae guid:  
     And I had nae mair bot hee. O." 5
- "Zour haukis bluid was nevir sae reid,  
     Edward, Edward:  
 Zour haukis bluid was nevir sae reid,  
     My deir son I tell thee, O." 10
- "O, I hae killed my reid-roan steid,  
     Mither, mither:  
 O, I hae killed my reid-roan steid,  
     That erst was sae fair and free, O." 15
- "Zour steid was auld, and ze hae gat mair,  
     Edward, Edward:  
 Zour steid was auld, and ze hae gat mair,  
     Sum other dule ze drie, O." 20
- "O, I hae killed my fadir deir,  
     Mither, mither:  
 O, I hae killed my fadir deir,  
     Alas! and wae is mee, O!"
- "And quhatten penance wul ze drie for that,  
     Edward, Edward?  
 And quhatten penance will ze drie for that?  
     My deir son, now tell me, O." 25
- "Ile set my feit in zonder boat,  
     Mither, mither:  
 Ile set my feit in zonder boat,  
     And Ile fare ovir the sea, O." 30





*Bevis* represents his hero, upon all occasions, breathing out defiance against

“Mahound and Termagaunte;”<sup>1</sup>

and so full of zeal for his religion, as to return the following polite message to a Paynim king’s fair daughter, who had fallen in love with him, and sent two Saracen knights to invite him to her bower :

“I wyll not ones stirre off this ground,  
To speake with an heathen hounde,  
Unchristian houndes, I rede you fle,  
Or I your harte bloud shall se.”<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, they return the compliment, by calling him elsewhere “a Christen hounde.”<sup>3</sup>

This was conformable to the real manners of the barbarous ages: perhaps the same excuse will hardly serve our bard for the situations in which he has placed some of his royal personages. That a youthful monarch should take a journey into another kingdom to visit his mistress *incog.* was a piece of gallantry paralleled in our own Charles I.; but that King Adland should be found lolling or leaning at his gate, (v. 35,) may be thought, perchance, a little out of character. And yet the great painter of manners, Homer, did not think it inconsistent with decorum to represent a king of the Taphians rearing himself at the gate of Ulysses to inquire for that monarch, when he touched at Ithaca, as he was taking a voyage with a ship’s cargo of iron to dispose of in traffic.<sup>4</sup> So little ought we to judge of ancient manners by our own.

Before I conclude this article, I cannot help observing that the reader will see in this ballad the character of the old minstrels (those successors of the bards) placed in a very respectable light:<sup>5</sup> here he will see one of them represented mounted on a fine horse, accompanied with an attendant to bear his harp after him, and to sing the poems of his composing. Here he will see him mixing in the company of kings without ceremony; no mean proof of the great antiquity of this poem. The farther we carry our inquiries back, the greater respect we find paid to the professors of poetry and music among all the Celtic and Gothic nations. Their character was deemed so sacred, that under its sanction our famous King Alfred (as we have already seen<sup>6</sup>) made no scruple to enter the Danish camp, and was at once admitted to the king’s head-quarters.<sup>7</sup> Our poet has suggested the same expedient to the heroes of this ballad. All the histories of the North are full of the

<sup>1</sup> See a short Memoir at the end of this ballad.

<sup>2</sup> Sign C. ij. b.

Sign C. j. b.

<sup>4</sup> Odyss. A. 105.

<sup>5</sup> See vol. ii. note subjoined to 1st pt. of *Beggar of Bednal*, &c.

<sup>6</sup> See the Essay on the ancient Minstrels prefixed to this vol.

<sup>7</sup> Even so late as the time of Froissart, we find Minstrels and Herald mentioned together as those who might securely go into an enemy’s country. Cap. cxl.

great reverence paid to this order of men. Harold Harfagre, a celebrated king of Norway, was wont to seat them at his table above all the officers of his court: and we find another Norwegian king placing five of them by his side in a day of battle, that they might be eye-witnesses of the great exploits they were to celebrate.<sup>8</sup> As to Estmere's riding into the hall while the kings were at table, this was usual in the ages of chivalry; and even to this day we see a relic of this custom still kept up, in the Champion's riding into Westminster-hall during the coronation dinner.<sup>9</sup>

HEARKEN to me, gentlemen,  
Come and you shall heare;  
He tell you of two of the boldest brethren,  
That ever born y-were.

The tone of them was Adler yonge, 5  
The tother was Kyng Estmere;  
The were as bolde men in their deedes,  
As any were, farr and neare.

As they were drinking ale and wine  
Within Kyng Estmeres halle: 10  
"When will ye marry a wyfe, brother,  
A wyfe to gladd us all?"

Then bespake him Kyng Estmere,  
And answered him hastilce:  
"I knowe not that ladye in any lande, 15  
That is able<sup>1</sup> to marry with mee."

"Kyng Adland hath a daughter, brother,  
Men call her bright and sheene;  
If I were kyng here in your stead,  
That ladye shold be queene." 20

Sayes, "Reade me, reade me, deare brother,  
Throughout merry Englànd,  
Where we might find a messenger  
Betweene us two to sende."

V. 10, his brother's hall. fol. MS.

V. 14, hartilye. fol. MS.

<sup>8</sup> *Bartholini Antiq. Dan.*, p. 173. *Northern Antiquities*, &c., vol. i. pp 389, &c.

<sup>9</sup> See also the account of Edw. II. in the *Essay on the Minstrels*.

<sup>1</sup> He means fit, suitable.



Sayes, "You shall ryde yourselfe, brother,  
 He beare you companee;  
 Many throughe fals messengers are deceived,  
 And I feare lest soe shold wee." 25

Thus the renisht them to ryde  
 Of twoe good renisht steedes, 30  
 And when they came to Kyng Adlands halle,  
 Of red golde shone their weedes.

And when the came to Kyng Adlands halle  
 Before the goodlye yate,  
 Ther they found good Kyng Adlånd 35  
 Rearing himselfe theratt.

"Nowe Christ thee save, good Kyng Adlånd,  
 Nowe Christ thee save and see."  
 Sayd, "You be welcome, Kyng Estmere,  
 Right hartilye to mee." 40

"You have a daughter," sayd Adler yonge,  
 "Men call her bright and sheene;  
 My brother wold marrye her to his wiffe,  
 Of Englande to be queene."

"Yesterdaye was att my dere daughtèr 45  
 Syr Bremor the Kyng of Spayne;  
 And then she nicked him of naye;  
 I feare sheele do youe the same."

"The Kyng of Spayne is a foule paynim,  
 And 'leeveth on Mahound; 50  
 And pitye it were that fayre ladyè  
 Shold marrye a heathen hound."

"But grant to me," sayes Kyng Estmere,  
 "For my love I you praye,  
 That I may see your daughter dere 55  
 Before I goe hence awaye."

"Althoughe itt is seven yeare and more  
 Syth my daughter was in halle,  
 She shall come downe once for your sake,  
 To glad my guestès alle." 60

V. 27, many a man . . . is. fol. MS.

V. 46, the king his sonne of Spayn. fol. MS.

Downe then came that mayden fayre,  
 With ladyes lacede in pall,  
 And halfe a hondred of bolde knightes,  
 To bring her from bowre to hall,  
 And eke as manye gentle squieres,  
 To waite upon them all.

65

The talents of golde were on her head sette,  
 Hunge lowe downe to her knee;  
 And everye rynge on her small finger  
 Shone of the chrystall free.

70

Sayes, "Christ you save, my deare Madàme;"  
 Sayes, "Christ you save and see;"  
 Sayes, "You be welcome, Kyng Estmere,  
 Right welcome unto mee.

"And iff you love me, as you saye,  
 So well and hartilèe,  
 All that ever you are comen about  
 Soone sped now itt may bee."

75

Then bespake her father deare:  
 "My daughter, I saye naye;  
 Remember well the Kyng of Spayne,  
 What he sayd yesterdaye.

80

"He wold pull downe my halles and castles,  
 And reave me of my lyfe:  
 And ever I feare that paynim kyng,  
 Iff I reave him of his wyfe."

85

"Your castles and your towres, father,  
 Arc stronglye built aboute;  
 And therefore of that foule paynim  
 Wee neede not stande in doubte.

90

"Plyght me your troth nowe, Kyng Estmère,  
 By heaven and your righte hande,  
 That you will marrye me to your wyfe,  
 And make me queene of your land."

Then Kyng Estmere he plight his troth  
 By heaven and his righte hand,  
 That he wolde marrye her to his wyfe,  
 And make her queene of his land.

95



And he tooke leave of that ladye fayre,  
 To goe to his owne countree,  
 To fetcche him dukes and lordes and knightes,  
 That married the might bee.

100

They had not ridden scant a myle,  
 A myle forthe of the towne,  
 But in did come the Kyng of Spayne,  
 With kempès many a one :

105

But in did come the Kyng of Spayne,  
 With manye a grimme baròne,  
 Tone day to marrye Kyng Adlands daughter,  
 Tother daye to carrye her home.

110

Then shee sent after Kyng Estmère,  
 In all the spede might bee,  
 That he must either returne and fighte,  
 Or goe home and lose his ladyè.

One whyle then the page he went,  
 Another whyle he ranne ;  
 Till he had oretaken Kyng Estmere,  
 I wis, he never blanne.

115

“ Tydings, tydings, Kyng Estmere ! ”

“ What tydings nowe, my boye ? ”

“ O tydings I can tell to you,  
 That will you sore annoye.

120

“ You had not ridden scant a myle,  
 A myle out of the towne,  
 But in did come the Kyng of Spayne  
 With kempès many a one :

125

“ But in did come the Kyng of Spayne  
 With manye a grimme baròne,  
 Tone day to marrye Kyng Adlands daughter,  
 Tother daye to carrye her home.

130

“ That ladye fayre she greetes you well,  
 And ever-more well by mee :  
 You must either turne againe and fighte,  
 Or goe home and lose your ladyè.”

- Sayes, "Reade me, reade me, deare brothèr, 135  
 My reade shall ryde<sup>2</sup> at thee,  
 Whiche way we best may turne and fighte,  
 To save this fayre ladyè."
- "Now hearken to me," sayes Adler yonge, 140  
 "And your reade must rise<sup>3</sup> at me ;  
 I quicklye will devise a waye  
 To sette thy ladye free.
- "My mother was a westerne woman,  
 And learned in gramaryè,<sup>4</sup>  
 And when I learned at the schole, 145  
 Something shee taught itt me.
- "There groweth an hearbe within this felde,  
 And iff it were but knowne,  
 His color which is whyte and redd,  
 It will make blacke and browne : 150
- "His color which is browne and blacke,  
 Itt will make redd and whyte ;  
 That sword is not in all Englande,  
 Upon his coate will byte.
- "And you shal be a harper, brother, 155  
 Out of the north countrée ;  
 And Ile be your boye, so faine of fighte,  
 To beare your harpe by your knee.
- "And you shall be the best harpèr,  
 That ever tooke harpe in hand ; 160  
 And I will be the best singèr,  
 That ever sung in this land.
- "Itt shal be written in our forheads,  
 All and in grammaryè,  
 That we towe are the boldest men 165  
 That are in all Christentyè."

<sup>2</sup> Sic MS. It should probably be *ryse*, i. e., my counsel shall arise from thee.—See ver. 140.

<sup>3</sup> Sic. MS.

<sup>4</sup> See note at the end of this ballad.



- And thus they renisht them to ryde,  
 On towe good renish steedes;  
 And whan the came to Kyng Adlands hall,  
 Of redd gold shone their weedes. 170
- And whan the came to Kyng Adlands hall,  
 Untill the fayre hall yate,  
 There they found a proud portèr,  
 Rearing himselfe theratt.
- Sayes, "Christ thee save, thou proud portèr;" 175  
 Sayes, "Christ thee save and see."  
 "Nowe you be welcome," sayd the portèr,  
 "Of what land soever ye bee."
- "We been harpers," sayd Adler yonge,  
 "Come out of the northe countrée;" 180  
 We beene come hither untill this place,  
 This proud weddinge for to see."
- Sayd, "And your color were white and redd,  
 As it is blacke and browne,  
 Ild saye Kyng Estmere and his brother 185  
 Were comen untill this towne."
- Then they pulled out a ryng of gold,  
 Layd itt on the porters arme:  
 'And ever we will thee, proud portèr,  
 Thow wilt saye us no harme." 190
- Sore he looked on Kyng Estmère,  
 And sore he handled the ryng,  
 Then opened to them the fayre hall yates,  
 He lett for no kind of thyng.
- Kyng Estmere he light off his steede, 195  
 Up att the fayre hall board;  
 The frothe that came from his brydle bitte  
 Light on Kyng Bremors beard.
- Sayes, "Stable thy steede, thou proud harpèr,  
 Go stable him in the stalle;" 200

V. 187, There is assurance that the *ryng* was not the article of personal adornment, but a coin.—Vide *Ring Money, Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. xvii.—Editor.

Itt doth not beseeme a proud harpèr  
To stable him in a kyngs halle."

"My ladd he is so lither," he sayd,  
"He will do nought that's meete;  
And aye that I cold but find the man,  
Were able him to beate." 205

"Thou speakst proud words," sayd the paynim kyng,  
"Thou harper here to mee:  
There is a man within this halle,  
That will beate thy lad and thee." 210

"O lett that man come downe," he sayd,  
"A sight of him wold I see;  
And whan hee hath beaten well my ladd,  
Then he shall beate of mee."

Downe then came the kemperye man, 215  
And looked him in the care;  
For all the gold, that was under heaven,  
He durst not neigh him neare.

"And how nowe, kempe," sayd the Kyng of Spayne,  
"And how what aileth thee?" 220  
He sayes, "Itt is written in his forehead  
All and in gramaryè,  
That for all the gold that is under heaven,  
I dare not neigh him nyc."

Kyng Estmere then pulled forth his harpe, 225  
And played thereon so sweete:  
Upstarte the ladye from the kynge,  
As hee sate at the meate.

"Now stay thy harpe, thou proud harpèr,  
Now stay thy harpe, I say; 230  
For an thou playest as thou beginnest,  
Thou'lt till<sup>s</sup> my bride awaye."

V. 202, to stable his steede. fol. MS.

<sup>s</sup> i.e. entice.—Vide Gloss. For *gramarye*, see the end of this ballad.



He strucked upon his harpe agayne,  
 And playd both fayre and free;  
 The ladye was so pleasde theratt,  
 She laught loud laughters three. 235

"Nowe sell me thy harpe," sayd the Kyng of Spayne,  
 "Thy harpe and stryngs eche one,  
 And as many gold nobles thou shalt have,  
 As there be stryngs thereon." 240

"And what wold ye doe with my harpe," he sayd,  
 "Iff I did sell it yee?"  
 "To playe my wiffe and me a FITT,<sup>6</sup>  
 When abed together we bee."

"Now sell me," quoth hee, "thy bryde soe gay, 245  
 As shee sitts laced in pall,  
 And as many gold nobles I will give,  
 As there be rings in the hall."

"And what wold ye doe with my bryde soe gay,  
 Iff I did sell her yee? 250  
 More seemelye it is for her fayre bodye  
 To lye by mee than thee."

Hee played agayne both loud and shrille,  
 And Adler he did syng,  
 "O ladye, this is thy owne true love;  
 Noe harper, but a kyng. 255

"O ladye, this is thy owne true love,  
 As playnlye thou mayest see;  
 And Ile rid thee of that foule paynim,  
 Who partes thy love and thee." 260

The ladye looked, the ladye blushte,  
 And blushte and lookt agayne,  
 While Adler he hath drawne his brande,  
 And hath the Sowdan slayne.

V. 253, Some liberties have been taken in the following stanzas; but wherever this edition differs from the preceding, it hath been brought nearer to the folio MS.

<sup>6</sup> i.e. a tune or strain of music.—See Gloss.

Up then rose the kemperye men, 265  
 And loud they gan to crye :  
 " Ah ! traytors, yee have slayne our kyng,  
 And therefore yee shall dye."

Kyng Estmere threwe the harpe asyde,  
 And swith he drew his brand ; 270  
 And Estmere he, and Adler yonge,  
 Right stiffe in stour can stand.

And aye their swordes soe sore can byte,  
 Throughe help of Gramaryè,  
 That soone they have slayne the kempery men, 275  
 Or forst them forth to flee.

Kyng Estmere tooke that fayre ladyè,  
 And marryed her to his wiffe,  
 And brought her home to merrye Englànd  
 With her to leade his life. 280

\* \* \* The word *Gramarye*, which occurs several times in the foregoing poem, is probably a corruption of the French word *Grimoire* which signifies a conjuring-book in the old French romances, if not the art of necromancy itself.

\* \* \* *Termagaunte* (mentioned above in p. 43) is the name given in the old romances to the god of the Saracens : in which he is constantly linked with *Mahound*, or Mahomet. Thus, in the legend of *Syr Guy the Soudan* (Sultan) swears,

" So helpe me, *Mahorne* of might,  
 And *Termagaunt* my God so bright."

Sign. p. iij. b.

This word is derived by the very learned editor of Junius from the Anglo-Saxon *Tyn very*, and *Magán* mighty. As this word has so sublime a derivation, and was so applicable to the true God, how shall we account for its being so degraded? Perhaps *Tyn-magan* or *Termagant* had been a name originally given to some Saxon idol, before our ancestors were converted to Christianity, or had been the peculiar attribute of one of their false deities ; and therefore the first Christian missionaries rejected it as profane, and improper to be applied to the true God. Afterwards, when the irruptions of the Saracens into Europe, and the Crusades into the East, had brought them acquainted with a new species of unbelievers, our ignorant ancestors, who thought all that did not receive the Christian law were necessarily Pagans and Idolaters, supposed the Mahometan creed was in all respects the same with that of their Pagan forefathers, and therefore made no scruple to give the ancient name of *Termagant* to the god of the Saracens ; just



in the same manner as they afterwards used the name of Sarazen to express any kind of Pagan or Idolater. In the ancient romance of *Merline* (in the Editor's folio MS.) the Saxons themselves that came over with Hengist, because they were not Christians, are constantly called Sarazens.

However that be, it is certain that, after the times of the Crusades, both Mahound and Termagaunt made their frequent appearance in the Pageants and religious Enterludes of the barbarous ages; in which they were exhibited with gestures so furious and frantic, as to become proverbial. Thus Skelton speaks of Wolsey,

“Like *Mahound* in a play,  
No man dare him withsay.”

Ed. 1736, p. 158.

And Bale, describing the threats used by some Papist magistrates to his wife, speaks of them as “grennyng upon her lyke *Termagauntes* in a playe.” [Actes of Engl. Votaryes, pt. 2, fo. 83, ed. 1550, 12mo.] Hence we may conceive the force of Hamlet's expression in Shakspeare, where, condemning a ranting player, he says, “I could have such a fellow whipt for ore-doing *Termagant*: it out-herods Herod.”—A. 3. sc. 3. By degrees the word came to be applied to an outrageous turbulent person, and especially to a violent brawling woman, to whom alone it is now confined: and this the rather, as, I suppose, the character of Termagant was anciently represented on the stage after the Eastern mode, with long robes or petticoats.

Another frequent character in the old Pageants or Enterludes of our ancestors, was the Sowdan or Soldan, representing a grim Eastern tyrant. This appears from a curious passage in Stow's *Annals* (p. 458). In a stage-play “the people know right well that he that plaith the Sowdain, is percase a sowter [shoe-maker], yet if one should cal him by his owne name, while he standeth in his majestie. one of his tormentors might hap to break his head.” The Sowdain, or Soldan, was a name given to any Sarazen king (being only a more rude pronounciation of the word *Sultan*), as the Soldan of Egypt, the Soudan of Persia, the Sowdan of Babylon, &c., who were generally represented as accompanied with grim Sarazens, whose business it was to punish and torment Christians.

I cannot conclude this short memoir without observing, that the French romancers, who had borrowed the word Termagant from us, and applied it, as we see in their old romances, corrupted it into *Ter-vagaunte*: and from them La Fontaine took it up, and has used it more than once in his tales. This may be added to the other proofs adduced in these volumes, of the great intercourse that formerly subsisted between the old minstrels and legendary writers of both nations, and that they mutually borrowed each other's romances.



## VII.

## Sir Patrick Spence,

## A SCOTTISH BALLAD,

is given from two MS. copies, transmitted from Scotland. In what age the hero of this ballad lived, or when this fatal expedition happened that proved so destructive to the Scots nobles, I have not been able to discover; yet am of opinion that their catastrophe is not altogether without foundation in history, though it has escaped my own researches. In the infancy of navigation, such as used the northern seas were very liable to shipwreck in the wintry months: hence a law was enacted in the reign of James the Third (a law which was frequently repeated afterwards), "That there be na schip frauched out of the realm with any staple gudes, fra the feast of Simons day and Jude, unto the feast of the purification of our Lady, called Candelmess."—Jam. III., Parl. 2, ch. 15.

In some modern copies, instead of Patrick Spence hath been substituted the name of Sir Andrew Wood, a famous Scottish admiral, who flourished in the time of our Edward IV., but whose story hath nothing in common with this of the ballad. As Wood was the most noted warrior of Scotland, it is probable that, like the Theban Hercules, he hath engrossed the renown of other heroes.

THE king sits in Dumferling toune,  
 Drinking the blude-reid wine:  
 "O quhar will I get guid sailòr,  
 To sail this schip of mine?"

Up and spak an eldern knight, 5  
 Sat at the kings richt kne:  
 "Sir Patrick Spence is the best sailòr,  
 That sails upon the se."

The king has written a braid letter,<sup>1</sup>  
 And signd it wi' his hand, 10  
 And sent it to Sir Patrick Spence,  
 Was walking on the sand.

The first line that Sir Patrick red,  
 A loud lauch lauched he:  
 The next line that Sir Patrick red, 15  
 The teir blinded his ee.

<sup>1</sup> A braid letter, *i. e.* open or patent; in opposition to *close* rolls.



“ O quha is this has don this deid,  
 This ill deid don to me ;  
 To send me out this time o’ the zeir,  
 To sail upon the se ?

20

“ Mak haste, mak haste, my mirry men all,  
 Our guid schip sails the morne.”

“ O say na sae, my master deir,  
 For I feir a deadlie storme.

“ Late, late yestreen I saw the new moone  
 Wi’ the auld moone in hir arme ;  
 And I feir, I feir, my deir master,  
 That we will com to harme.”

25

O our Scots nobles wer richt laith  
 To weet their cork-heild schoone ;  
 Bot lang owre a’ the play wer playd,  
 Their hats they swam aboone.

30

O lang, lang may their ladies sit  
 Wi’ thair fans into their hand,  
 Or eir they se Sir Patrick Spence  
 Cum sailing to the land.

35

O lang, lang may the ladies stand  
 Wi’ thair gold kems in their hair,  
 Waiting for thair ain deir lords,  
 For they’ll se thame na mair.

40

Have owre, have owre to Aberdour,<sup>2</sup>  
 It’s fiftie fadom deip :  
 And thair lies guid Sir Patrick Spence,  
 Wi’ the Scots lords at his feit.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> A village lying upon the river Forth, the entrance to which is some times denominated *De mortuo mari*.

<sup>3</sup> An ingenious friend thinks the author of *Hardyknute* has borrowed several expressions and sentiments from the foregoing and other old Scottish songs in this collection.



## VIII.

**Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne.<sup>1</sup>**

We have here a ballad of Robin Hood (from the Editor's folio MS.) which was never before printed, and carries marks of much greater antiquity than any of the common popular songs on this subject.

The severity of those tyrannical forest-laws that were introduced by our Norman kings, and the great temptation of breaking them by such as lived near the royal forests, at a time when the yeomanry of this kingdom were everywhere trained up to the long-bow, and excelled all other nations in the art of shooting, must constantly have occasioned a great number of outlaws, and especially of such as were the best marksmen. These naturally fled to the woods for shelter, and forming into troops, endeavoured by their numbers to protect themselves from the dreadful penalties of their delinquency. The ancient punishment for killing the king's deer, was loss of eyes and castration: a punishment far worse than death. This will easily account for the troops of banditti which formerly lurked in the royal forests, and from their superior skill in archery, and knowledge of all the recesses of those unfrequented solitudes, found it no difficult matter to resist or elude the civil power.

Among all these, none was ever more famous than the hero of this ballad, whose chief residence was in Shirewood Forest, in Nottinghamshire: the heads of whose story, as collected by Stow, are briefly these.

"In this time [about the year 1190, in the reign of Richard I.] were many robbers, and outlawes, among the which Robin Hood and Little John, renowned theeves, continued in woods, despoiling and robbing the goods of the rich. They killed none but such as would invade them: or by resistance for their own defence.

"The saide Robert entertained an hundred fall men and good archers with such spoiles and thefts as he got, upon whom four hundred (were they ever so strong) durst not give the onset. He suffered no woman to be oppressed, violated, or otherwise molested: poore mens goods he spared, abundantlie relieving them with that which by theft he got from abbeyes and the houses of rich carles: whom Maior (the historian) blameth for his rapine and theft, but of all theeves he affirmeth him to be the prince and the most gentle theefe."—*Annals*, p. 159.

The personal courage of this celebrated outlaw, his skill in archery, his humanity, and especially his levelling principle of taking from the rich and giving to the poor, have in all ages rendered him the favourite of the common people: who, not content to celebrate his memory by innumerable songs and stories, have erected him into the dignity of an earl. Indeed it is not impossible but our hero, to gain the more respect from his followers, or they to derive the more credit to their profession,

---

<sup>1</sup> Ritson notes that Gisborne is a market town in the West Riding of the county of York, on the borders of Lancashire.—Editor.



may have given rise to such a report themselves: for we find it recorded in an epitaph, which, if genuine, must have been inscribed on his tombstone near the nunnery of Kirk-lees in Yorkshire; where (as the story goes) he was bled to death by a treacherous nun, to whom he applied for phlebotomy:

Hear undernead this laill stean  
 laiz robert earl of huntingun  
 nea areir ber az he sac geud  
 an pipl kauld im Robin Weud  
 sick utlawz az hi an iz men  
 bil England nibir si agen  
 obiit 24 kal. Decembris, 1247.<sup>2</sup>

This epitaph appears to me suspicious; however, a late Antiquary has given a pedigree of Robin Hood, which, if genuine, shows that he had real pretensions to the earldom of Huntington, and that his true name was ROBERT FITZ-OOH.<sup>3</sup> Yet the most ancient poems on Robin Hood make no mention of this earldom. He is expressly asserted to have been a yeoman<sup>4</sup> in a very old legend in verse, preserved in the archives of the public library at Cambridge<sup>5</sup> in eight FYTRES or Parts, printed in black letter, quarto, thus inscribed, "¶ Here begynneth a lytell geste of Robyn hode and his meyné, and of the proude sheryfe of Notyngham." The first lines are,

"Lithe and lysten, gentylmen,  
 That be of fre-bore blode:  
 I shall you tell of a good YEMAN,  
 His name was Robyn hode.

"Robyn was a proude out-lawe,  
 Whiles he walked on grounde;  
 So curteyse an outlawe as he was one,  
 Was never none yfounde," &c.

The printer's colophon is, "¶ Explicit Kinge Edward and Robin hode and Lyttel Johan. Enprented at London in Fletestrete at the sygne of the sone by Wynkin de Worde." In Mr. Garrick's collection<sup>6</sup> is a different edition of the same poem, "¶ Imprinted at London upon the thre Crane wharfe by Wyllyam Copland," containing at the end a little dramatic piece on the subject of Robin Hood and the Friar, not found in the former copy, called, "A newe playe for to be played in Maye games very plesaunte and full of pastyme. ¶ (∴) D."

I shall conclude these preliminary remarks with observing, that the hero of this ballad was the famous subject of popular songs so early as

<sup>2</sup> See Thoresby's *Ducat. Leod.* p. 576. *Biog. Brit.* vi. 3933.

<sup>3</sup> Stukeley, in his *Palæographia Britannica*, No. II. 1746.

<sup>4</sup> See also the following ballad, v. 147. <sup>5</sup> Num. D. 5, 2.

<sup>6</sup> Old Plays, 4to, K. vol. x.

the time of K. Edw. III. In the *Visions of Pierce Plowman*, written in that reign, a monk says,

I can rimes of Roben Hod, and Randal of Chester,  
But of our Horde and our Lady, I lerne nothyng at all.

Fol. 26, ed. 1550.

See also in Bp. Latimer's *Sermons*<sup>7</sup> a very curious and characteristic story, which shows what respect was shown to the memory of our archer in the time of that prelate.

The curious reader will find many other particulars relating to this celebrated outlaw, in Sir John Hawkins's *Hist. of Music*, vol. iii. p. 410, 4to.

For the catastrophe of Little John, who, it seems, was executed for a robbery on Arbor-hill, Dublin, (with some curious particulars relating to his skill in archery), see Mr. J. C. Walker's ingenious "Memoir on the Armour and Weapons of the Irish," p. 129, annexed to his "Historical Essay on the Dress of the ancient and modern Irish." Dublin, 1788, 4to.

Some liberties were, by the Editor, taken with this ballad; which, in this edition, hath been brought nearer to the folio MS.

WHEN shaws beene sheene, and shradds full fayre,  
And leaves both large and longe,  
Itt is merrye walkyng in the fayre forrest  
To heare the small birdes songe.

The woodweele sang, and wold not cease,  
Sitting upon the spraye,  
Soc lowde, he wakened Robin Hood,  
In the greenwood where he lay.

5

"Now, by my faye," sayd jollye Robin,  
"A sweaven I had this night;  
I dreamt me of tow wighty yemen,  
That fast with me can fight.

10

"Methought they did mee beate and binde,  
And tooke my bow mee free;  
Iff I be Robin alive in this lande,  
Ile be wroken on them towe."

15

V. 1, for *shaws* the MS. has *shales*; and *shradds* should perhaps be *swards*: i. e., the surface of the ground: viz. "when the fields are in their beauty," or perhaps *shades*. (Mr. Halliwell, however, defines *shale* as *husk*; "The *shales* or stalkes of hempe;" and *shradd* as a twig.—Editor.)

<sup>7</sup> Serm. 6th before K. Ed. Apr. 12, fol. 75. Gilpin's *Life of Lat.* p. 122.



- “ Sweavens are swift, master,” quoth John,  
“ As the wind that blowes ore the hill;  
For if itt be never so loude this night,  
To-morrow it may be still.” 20
- “ Buske yee, bowne yee, my merry men all,  
And John shall goe with mee,  
For Ile goe seeke yond wight yeomen,  
In greenwood where the bee.”
- Then they cast on their gownes of grene, 25  
And tooke theyr bowes each one;  
And they away to the greene forrèst  
A shooting forth are gone;
- Untill they came to the merry greenwood, 30  
Where they had gladdest to bee;  
There were they ware of a wight yeomàn,  
His body leaned to a tree.
- A sword and a dagger he wore by his side,  
Of manye a man the bane;  
And he was clad in his capull hyde, 35  
Topp and tayll and mayne.
- “ Stand you still, master,” quoth Little John,  
“ Under this tree so grene,  
And I will go to yond wight yeoman  
To know what he doth meane.” 40
- “ Ah! John, by me thou settest noe store,  
And that I farley finde:  
How oft send I my men beffore,  
And tarry my selfe behinde!
- “ It is no cunning a knave to ken, 45  
And a man but heare him speake;  
And itt were not for bursting of my bowe,  
John, I thy head wold breake.”
- As often wordes they breeden bale,  
So they parted Robin and John; 50  
And John is gone to Barnesdale;  
The gates<sup>8</sup> he knoweth eche one.

<sup>8</sup> i. e. ways, passes, paths, ridings. *Gate* is a common word in the North for way.

But when he came to Barnesdale,  
Great heavinesse there hee hadd,  
For he found tow of his owne fellows  
Were slaine both in a slade. 55

And Scarlette he was flying a-foote  
Faste over stocke and stone,  
For the sheriffe with seven score men  
Fast after him is gone. 60

“One shoote now I will shoote,” quoth John,  
“With Christ his might and mayne;  
Ile make yond fellow that flyes soe fast,  
To stopp he shall be fayne.”

Then John bent up his long bende-bowe, 65  
And fetteled him to shoote:  
The bow was made of tender boughes,  
And fell down to his foote.

“Woe worth, woe worth thee, wicked wood,  
That ere thou grew on a tree; 70  
For now this day thou art my bale,  
My boote when thou shold bee.”

His shoote it was but loosely shott,  
Yet flewe not the arrowe in vaine,  
For itt mett one of the sherriffes men, 75  
Good William a Trent was slaine.

It had bene better of William a Trent  
To have bene abed with sorrowe,  
Than to be that day in the green-wood slade  
To meet with Little Johns arrowe. 80

But as it is said, when men be mett  
Fyve can doe more than three,  
The sheriffe hath taken Little John,  
And bound him fast to a tree.

“Thou shalt be drawen by dale and downe, 85  
And hanged hye on a hill;”  
“But thou mayst fayle of thy purpose,” quoth John,  
“If itt be Christ his will.”



- Lett us leave talking of Little John,  
 And thinke of Robin Hood, 90  
 How he is gone to the wight yeomàn,  
 Where under the leaves he stood.
- “ Good morrowe, good fellowe,” sayd Robin so fayre,  
 “ Good morrowe, good fellow,” quoth he.  
 “ Methinks by this bowe thou beares in thy hande, 95  
 A good archere thou sholdst bee.”
- “ I am wilfulle of my waye,” quo’ the yeman,  
 “ And of my morning tyde :”  
 “ Ile lead thee through the wood,” sayd Robin,  
 “ Good fellow, Ile be thy guide.” 100
- “ I seeke an outlàwe,” the straunger sayd,  
 “ Men call him Robin Hood ;  
 Rather Ild meet with that proud outlàwe  
 Than fortye pound soe good.”
- “ Now come with me, thou wight yemàn, 105  
 And Robin thou soone shalt see ;  
 But first let us some pastime find  
 Under the greenwood tree.
- “ First let us some masterye make  
 Among the woods so even ; 110  
 We may chance to meet with Robin Hood  
 Here att some unsett steven.”
- They cutt them down two summer shroggs,  
 That grew both under a breere,  
 And sett them threescore rood in twaine, 115  
 To shoote the prickes y-fere.
- “ Leade on, good fellowe,” quoth Robin Hood,  
 “ Leade on, I doe bidd thee.”  
 “ Nay, by my faith, good fellowe,” hee sayd,  
 “ My leader thou shalt bee.” 120
- The first time Robin shot at the pricke,  
 He mist but an inch it fro ;  
 The yeoman he was an archer good,  
 But he cold never shoote soe.

The second shoote had the wightye yemàn, 125  
 He shot within the garlände ;  
 But Robin he shott far better than hee,  
 For he clave the good pricke-wande.

“ A blessing upon thy heart,” he sayd,  
 “ Good fellowe, thy shooting is goode ; 130  
 For an thy hart be as good as thy hand,  
 Thou wert better then Robin Hoode.

“ Now tell me thy name, good fellowe,” sayd he,  
 “ Under the leaves of lyne.”  
 “ Nay, by my faith,” quoth bolde Robin, 135  
 “ Till thou have told me thine.”

“ I dwell by dale and downe,” quoth hee,  
 “ And Robin to take I me sworne ;  
 And when I am called by my right name,  
 I am Guy of good Gisbørne.” 140

“ My dwelling is in this wood,” sayes Robin,  
 “ By thee I set right nought :  
 I am Robin Hood of Barnèsdale,  
 Whom thou so long hast sought.”

He that had neither beene kithe nor kin, 145  
 Might have seen a full fayre sight,  
 To see how together these yeomen went  
 With blades both browne<sup>9</sup> and bright :

\* The common epithet for a sword or other offensive weapon, in the old metrical romances, is *brown* : as “ brown brand,” or “ brown sword : brown bill,” &c., and sometimes even “ bright brown sword.” Chaucer applies the word *rustie* in the same sense ; thus he describes the *Reve* ;

“ And by his side he bare a rustie blade.”

Prol. ver. 620.

And even thus the god Mars :

“ And in his hand he had a rousty sword.”

Test. of Cressid. 188.

Spenser has sometimes used the same epithet : see Warton's *Observ.* vol. ii. p. 62. It should seem from this particularity, that our ancestors did not pique themselves upon keeping their weapons bright : perhaps they deemed it more honourable to carry them stained with the blood of their enemies.



To see how these yeomen together they fought  
Two howres of a summers day,  
Yett neither Robin Hood nor Sir Guy  
Them fettled to flye away. 150

Robin was reachles on a roote,  
And stumbled at that tyde;  
And Guy was quicke and nimble with-all,  
And hitt him ore the left side. 155

"Ah, deere Lady," sayd Robin Hood tho,  
"Thou art but mother and may";  
I think it was never mans destinye  
To dye before his day." 160

Robin thought on Our Ladye deere,  
And soone leapt up againe,  
And strait he came with a 'backward' stroke,  
And he Sir Guy hath slayne.

He took Sir Guys head by the hayre,  
And stuck itt upon his bowes end:  
"Thou hast beene a traytor all thy liffe,  
Which thing must have an end." 165

Robin pulled forth an Irish kniffe,  
And nicked Sir Guy in the face,  
That he was never on woman born  
Cold tell whose head it was. 170

Sayes, "Lye there, lye there now, Sir Guy,  
And with me be not wrothe;  
Iff thou have had the worst strokes at my hand,  
Thou shalt have the better clothe." 175

Robin did off his gowne of greene,  
And on Sir Guy did throwe,  
And hee put on that capull hyde,  
That cladd him topp to toe. 180

"The bowe, the arrowes, and litle horne,  
Now with me I will beare;  
For I will away to Barnèsdale,  
To see how my men doe fare."

- Robin Hood sett Guys horne to his mouth, 185  
 And a loud blast in it did blow :  
 That beheard the sheriffe of Nottingham,  
 As he leaned under a lowe.
- “ Harken, hearken,” sayd the sheriffe, 190  
 “ I heare nowe tydings good,  
 For yonder I heare Sir Guys horne blowe,  
 And he hath slaine Robin Hoode.
- “ Yonder I heare Sir Guys horne blowe,  
 Itt blowes soe well in tyde,  
 And yonder comes that wightye yeoman, 195  
 Cladd in his capull hyde.
- “ Come hyther, come hyther, thou good Sir Guy,  
 Aske what thou wilt of mee.”
- “ O I will none of thy gold,” sayd Robin, 200  
 “ Nor I will none of thy fee.
- “ But now I have slaine the master,” he sayes,  
 “ Let me goe strike the knave ;  
 For this is all the rewarde I aske,  
 Nor noe other will I have.”
- “ Thou art a madman,” said the sheriffe, 205  
 “ Thou sholdst have had a knightes fee ;  
 But seeing thy asking hath beene soe bad,  
 Well granted it shale be.”
- When Little John heard his master speake,  
 Well knewe he it was his steven ; 210  
 “ Now shall I be looset,” quoth Little John,  
 “ With Christ his might in heaven.”
- Fast Robin hee hyed him to Little John,  
 He thought to loose him belive :  
 The sheriffe and all his companye 215  
 Fast after him can drive.
- “ Stand abacke, stand abacke,” sayd Robin ;  
 “ Why draw you mee so neere ?  
 Itt was never the use in our countrye,  
 Ones shrift another shold heere.” 220



But Robin pulled forth an Irysh knife,  
 And losed John hand and foote,  
 And gave him Sir Guys bow into his hand,  
 And bade it be his boote.

Then John he took Guys bow in his hand, 225  
 His boltes and arrowes eche one :  
 When the sheriffe saw Little John bend his bow,  
 He fettled him to be gone.

Towards his house in Nottingham towne  
 He fled full fast away, 230  
 And soe did all the companye,  
 Not one behind wold stay.

But he cold neither runne soe fast,  
 Nor away soe fast cold ryde,  
 But Little John with an arrowe soe broad 235  
 He shott him into the ' backe '-syde.

\*.\* The title of *Sir* was not formerly peculiar to knights, it was given to priests, and sometimes to very inferior personages.

Dr. Johnson thinks this title was applied to such as had taken the degree of A.B. in the universities, who are still styled *Domini*, "Sirs," to distinguish them from Under-graduates, who have no prefix, and from Masters of Arts, who are styled *Magistri*, "Masters."



## IX.

An Elegy on Henry, Fourth Earl of Northumberland.<sup>1</sup>

The subject of this poem, which was written by Skelton, is the death of HENRY PERCY, fourth Earl of Northumberland, who fell a victim to the avarice of Henry VII. In 1489, the parliament had granted the king a subsidy, for carrying on the war in Bretagne. This tax was found so heavy in the North, that the whole country was in a flame. The Earl of Northumberland, then lord-lieutenant for Yorkshire, wrote to inform the king of the discontent, and praying an abatement. But nothing is so unrelenting as avarice: the king wrote back, that not a penny should be abated. This message being delivered by the earl

<sup>1</sup> Percy's text has been carefully revised by collation with the reading of the Elegy as given by the Rev. Alexander Dyce.—Editor.

with too little caution, the populace rose, and supposing him to be the promoter of their calamity, broke into his house, and murdered him, with several of his attendants; who yet are charged by Skelton with being backward in their duty on this occasion. This melancholy event happened at the earl's seat at Cocklodge, near Thirske, in Yorkshire, April 28, 1489. See Lord Bacon, &c.

If the reader does not find much poetical merit in this old poem, (which yet is one of Skelton's best,) he will see a striking picture of the state and magnificence kept up by our ancient nobility during the feudal times. This great earl is described here as having among his menial servants, *knights, squires*, and even *barons*: see v. 32, 183, &c.; which, however different from modern manners, was formerly not unusual with our greater barons, whose castles had all the splendour and offices of a royal court, before the laws against Retainers abridged and limited the number of their attendants.

John Skelton, who commonly styled himself Poet-Laureat, died June 21, 1529. The following poem, which appears to have been written soon after the event, is printed from an ancient MS. copy, preserved in the British Museum, being much more correct than that printed among Skelton's Poems, in bl. let. 12mo, 1568. It is addressed to Henry Percy, fifth Earl of Northumberland, and is prefaced, &c., in the following manner:

*Poeta Skelton Laureatus libellum suum metricè alloquitur.*

Ad dominum properato meum mea pagina Percy,  
 Qui Northumbrorum jura paterna gerit.  
 Ad nutum celebris tu porna repone leonis,  
 Quæque suo patri tristia justa cano.  
 Ast ubi perlegit, dubiam sub mente volutet  
 Fortunam, cuncta quæ male fida rotat.  
 Qui leo sit felix, et Nestoris occupet annos;  
 Ad libitum cujus ipse paratus ero.

SKELTON LAUREAT UPON THE DOLOURUS DETHE AND MUCHE  
 LAMENTABLE CHAUNCE OF THE MOST HONORABLE ERLE  
 OF NORTHUMBERLANDE.

I WAYLE, I wepe, I sobbe, I sigh ful sore  
 The dedely fate, the dolefulle desteny  
 Of hym that is gone, alas! without restore,  
 Of the bloud<sup>2</sup> royall descending nobelly;  
 Whose lordshyp doutles was slayne lamentably 5  
 Thorow treson, ageyn him compassed and wrought,  
 Trew to his prince in word, in dede, and thought.

<sup>2</sup> The mother of Henry, first Earl of Northumberland, was Mary, daughter to Henry, Earl of Lancaster, whose father Edmond was second son of King Henry II. The mother and wife of the second Earl of



Of heavenly poems, O Clyo, calde by name  
 In the colege of Musis goddes hystoriall,  
 Adres thé to me, whiche am both halt and lame  
 In elect uteraunce to make memoryall!  
 To thé for souccour, to thé for helpe I call,  
 Mine homely rudnes and dryghnes to expell  
 With the freshe waters of Elyconys well.

10

Of noble actes aunciently enrolde  
 Of famous pryncis and lordes of astate,  
 By thy report ar wont to be extold,  
 Regestringe trewly every formare date;  
 Of thy bountie after the usuall rate  
 Kyndell in me suche plenty of thy noblès,  
 Thes sorrowfulle dities that I may shew expres.

15

20

In sesons past, who hathe h[ea]rde or sene  
 Of formar writyng by any presidente  
 That vilane hastarddis in their furious tene,  
 Fulfylled with malice of froward entente,  
 Confetered togeder of commonn concente  
 Falsly to slee theyr moste singuler good lord?  
 It may be regestrede of shamefull recorde.

25

So noble a man, so valiaunt lord and knyght,  
 Fulfilled with honor, as all the world doth ken;  
 At his commaundement which had both day and nyght  
 Knyghtes and squyers, at every season when  
 He calde upon them, as meniall houshold men;  
 Were not these commons uncurteis karlis of kind  
 To slo their owne lord? God was not in their mynd.

30

35

And were not they to blame, I say also,  
 That were aboute him, his owne servants of trust,  
 To suffre him slayn of his mortall fo?  
 Fled away from hym, let hym ly in the dust;  
 They bode not till the reckenyng were discust;  
 What shuld I flatter? what shuld I glose or paint?  
 Ey, fy for shame, their hartes were to faint.

40

Northumberland were both lineal descendants of King Edward III. The Percys also were lineally descended from the Emperor Charlemagne and the ancient kings of France, by their ancestor Josceline de Lovaine (son of

In England and Fraunce which gretly was redouted,  
 Of whom both Flaunders and Scotland stode in drede,  
 To whome great estates obeyed and lowted, 45  
 A mayny of rude villayns made hym for to blede;  
 Unkyndly they slew him; that holp them oft at nede:  
 He was their bulwark, their paves, and their wall,  
 Yet shamfully they slew hym; that shame mot them befall!  
 I say, ye comoners, why wer ye so stark mad? 50  
 What frantyk frensy fyll in your brayne?  
 Where was your wit and reson ye should have had?  
 What wilful folly made yow to ryse agayne  
 Your naturall lord? alas, I cannot fayne:  
 Ye armyd you with will, and left your wit behynd; 55  
 Well may you be called comones most unkynd.  
 He was your chefteyne, your shelde, your chef defence,  
 Redy to assyst you in every time of nede;  
 Your worship depended of his excellence;  
 Alas, ye mad men, to far ye did excede; 60  
 Your hap was unhappy, to ill was your spede:  
 What moved you againe him to war or to fyght?  
 What alyde you to sle your lord again all ryght?  
 The ground of his quarel was for his soverain lord,  
 The well concerning of all the hole lande, 65  
 Demandyng suche duties as nedes most acord  
 To the ryght of his prince, which shold not be withstand;  
 For whose cause ye slew him with your owne hand:  
 But had his noble men done wel that day,  
 Ye had not been able to have sayd him nay. 70  
 But ther was fals packing, or els I am begylde;  
 How-be-it the mater was evydent and playne,  
 For if they had occupied their spere and their shilde,  
 This noble man doutles had not bene slayne.  
 But men say they wer lynked with a double chaine, 75  
 And held with the comones under a cloke,  
 Which kindeled the wild fyr that made all this smoke.

---

Godfrey Duke of Brabant), who took the name of PERCY on marrying the  
 heiress of that house in the reign of Hen. II. Vide Camden's *Britan.*  
 Edmonson, &c.



The commons renyed ther taxes to pay,  
 Of them demaunded and asked by the kyng;  
 With one voice importune they playnly sayd nay; 80  
 They buskt them on a bushment themselfe in baile to  
 bring,

Againe the kyngs plesure to wrestle or to wring;  
 Bluntly as bestis with boste and with crye  
 They sayd they forsed not, nor carede not to dy.

The noblenes of the north, this valiant lord and knight, 85  
 As man that was innocent of trechery or traine,  
 Presed forth boldly to withstand the myght,  
 And, lyke marciall Hector, he faught them agayne,  
 Vygorously upon them with might and with maine,  
 Trustyng in noble men that were with him there; 90  
 Bot al they fled from hym for falshode or fere.

Barones, knyghtes, squiers, one and all,  
 Together with servauntes of his famuly,  
 Turned their backis, and let their master fal,  
 Of whos [life] they counted not a flye; 95  
 Take up whose wold, for ther they let him ly.  
 Alas, his gold, his fee, his annual rent  
 Upon suche a sort was ille bestowd and spent!

He was enviroind aboute on every syde  
 With his enemyes, that wer starke mad and wode; 100  
 Yet while he stode he gave them woundes wyde;  
 Allas for ruth! what thoughe his mynd wer gode,  
 His corage manly, yet ther he shed his blode:  
 Al left alone, alas, he foughte in vayne!  
 For cruelly among them ther he was slayne. 105

Alas for pite! that Percy thus was spylyt,  
 The famous Erle of Northumberland;  
 Of knyghtly prowes the sword, pomel, and hylt,  
 The myghty lyon<sup>3</sup> doutted by se and lande;  
 O dolorus chaunce of Fortunes froward hande! 110  
 What man, remembryng howe shamfully he was slaine,  
 From bitter weping himself can restrain?

<sup>3</sup> Alluding to his crest and supporters. *Doutted* is contracted for *redoubted*.

O cruell Mars, thou dedly god of war!

O dolorous tewisday, dedicate to thy name,  
When thou shoke thy sworde so noble a man to mar! 115

O grounde ungracious, unhappy be thy fame,  
Which wert endyed with rede bloud of the same  
Most noble erle! O foule mysuryd ground,  
Whereon he gat his finall dedely wounde!

O Atropos, of the fatall systers iii 120

Goddes most cruel unto the lyfe of man,  
All merciles, in thé is no pite!

O homicide, which sleest all that thou can,  
So forcibly upon this erle thou ran,  
That with thy sword, enharpit of mortall drede, 125  
Thou kit asonder his perfight vitall threde!

My wordes unpullysht be, nakide and playne,  
Of aureat poems they want ellumynyng;  
But by them to knowlege ye may attayne  
Of this lordes dethe and of his murdryng; 130

Which whils he lyvyd had fuyson of every thing,  
Of knights, of squyers, chyf lord of toure and towne,  
Tyll fykkell Fortune began on hym to frowne:

Paregall to dukes, with kynges he might compare,  
Surmountinge in honor all cryls he did excede; 135  
To all countreis aboute hym reporte me I dare;  
Lyke to Eneas benigne in worde and dede,  
Valiant as Hector in every marciall nede,  
Provydent, discrete, circumspect, and wyse,  
Tyll the chaunce ran agayne hym of Fortunes duble dyse.

What nedeth me for to extoll his fame 141

With my rude pen enkankered all with rust?  
Whose noble actes show worshiply his name,  
Transendyng far myne homly Muse, that muste  
Yet somewhat wright supprised with herty lust, 145  
Truly reportyng his right noble estate,  
Immortally whiche is immaculate?

His noble blode never destaynyd was,  
Trew to his prince for to defend his ryght  
Doblenes hatyng fals maters to compas, 150



Treytory and treason he banyshit out of syght,  
 With truth to medle was al his holl delyght,  
 As all his countrey can testyfy the same :  
 To sle suche a lorde, alas, it was great shame.  
 If the hole quere of the Musis nyne 155  
     In me all onely wer set and comprised,  
 Enbrethed with the blast of influence devyne,  
     As perfytly as could be thought or devisyd ;  
     To me also allthough it were promised  
 Of laureat Phebus holy the eloquence, 160  
 All were to lytell for his magnificence.  
 O yonge lyon, but tender yet of age,  
     Grow and encrese, remembre thyne estate ;  
 God thé assyst unto thyn herytage,  
     And geve thé grace to be more fortunate ! 165  
 Agayn rebellyones arme thé to make debate ;  
 And, as the lyone, whiche is of bestes kynge,  
 Unto thy subjectes be curteis and benygne.  
 I pray God sende thé prosperous lyfe and long,  
     Stable thy mynde constant to be and fast, 170  
 Ryght to mayntayn, and to resyst all wronge :  
     All flater yng faytors abhor and from thé cast :  
     Of foule detraction God kepe thé from the blast  
 Let double delyng in thé have no place,  
 And be not lyght of credence in no case. 175  
 With hevy chere, with dolorous hart and mynd,  
     Eche man may sorow in his inward thought  
 This lordes death, whose pere is hard to fynd,  
     Allgif Englund and Fraunce were thorow saught.  
     Al kynges, all princes, al dukes, well they ought, 180  
 Both temporall and spiritual, for to complayne  
 This noble man, that crewelly was slayne :  
 More specially barons, and those knyghtes bold,  
     And al other gentilmen with him enterteyned  
 In fee, as menyall men of his housold, 185  
 Whom he as lord worshiply mainteyned ;  
     To sorowful weping they ought to be constreined,  
 As oft as they call to theyr remembraunce,  
 Of ther good lord the fate and dedely chaunce.

O perlese Prince of heven emperyall ! 190  
 That with one word formed al thing of noughte ;  
 Heven, hell, and erthe obey unto thy call ;  
 Which to thy resemblaunce wondersly hast wrought  
 All mankynd, whom thou full dere hast bought,  
 With thy bloud precious our finaunce thou did pay, 195  
 And us redemed from the fendys pray ;  
  
 To thé pray we, as Prince imcomparable,  
 As thou art of mercy and pyte the well,  
 Thou bring unto thy joye eterminable  
 The soull of this lorde from all daunger of hell, 200  
 In endles blys with thé to byde and dwell  
 In thy palace above the orient,  
 Where thou art Lord, and God omnipotent.  
  
 O quene of mercy, O lady full of grace,  
 Mayden most pure, and Goddes moder dere, 205  
 To sorowful hartes chef comfort and solace,  
 Of all women O flowre withouten pere !  
 Pray to thy Son above the sterris clere,  
 He to vouchesaf, by thy mediacion,  
 To pardon thy servaunt and brynge to salvacion. 210  
  
 In joy triumphaunt the heavenly yerarchy,  
 With all the hole sorte of that glorious place,  
 His soull mot receyve into theyr company  
 Thorow bounty of Hym that formed all solace :  
 Wel of pite, of mercy, and of grace, 215  
 The Father, the Sonn, and the Holy Ghost,  
 In Trinitate one God of myghtes moste !

\* \* I have placed the foregoing poem of Skelton's before the following extract from Hawes, not only because it was written first, but because I think Skelton is in general to be considered as the earlier poet, many of his poems being written long before Hawes's *Graunde Amour*.





## X.

The Tower of Doctrine.<sup>1</sup>

The reader has here a specimen of the descriptive powers of Stephen Hawes, a celebrated poet in the reign of Henry VII., though now little known. It is extracted from an allegorical poem of his (written in 1505) intitled, "The History of Graunde Amoure and La Belle Pucel, called the Palace of Pleasure," &c. 4to, 1555. See more of Hawes in *Ath. Ox.* v. I. p. 6, and Warton's *Observ.* v. ii. p. 105. He was also author of a book intitled, "The Temple of Glass. Wrote by Stephen Hawes, gentleman of the bedchamber to K. Henry VII." Pr. for Caxton, 4to, no date.

The following stanzas are taken from ch. p. iii. and iv. of the History above mentioned. "How Fame departed from Graunde Amoure and left him with Governauce and Grace, and howe he went to the Tower of Doctrine," &c. As we are able to give no small lyric piece of Hawes's, the reader will excuse the insertion of this extract.

I LOKED about, and sawe a craggy roche  
 Farre in the west, neare to the element;  
 And as I dyd then unto it approche,  
 Upon the toppe I sawe refulgent  
 The royall tower of MORALL DOCUMENT, 5  
 Made of fine copper, with turrets fayre and hye,  
 Which against Phebus shone so marveylously;  
 That for the very perfect bryghtnes,  
 What of the tower and of the cleare sunne,  
 I coulde nothyng beholde the goodlines 10  
 Of that palaice whereas Doctrine did wonne;  
 Tyll at the last, with mysty wyndes donne,  
 The radiant bryghtnes of golden Phebus  
 Auster gan cover with clowde tenebrus.  
 Then to the tower I drewe nere and nere, 15  
 And often mused of the great hyghnes  
 Of the craggy rocke, whiche quadrant did appeare;  
 But the fayre tower so much of ryches  
 Was all about sexangled doubtles,  
 Gargeyld with greyhoundes and with many lyons, 20  
 Made of fyne golde, with divers sundry dragons.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This poem has received some few corrections by comparison with *The Pastime of Pleasure* as put forth by the Percy Society in 1845.—Editor.

<sup>2</sup> Greyhounds, lions, dragons, were at that time the royal supporters.

The little 'turretts' with ymages of golde  
 About was set, whiche with the wynde aye moved.  
 With propre vices that I did well beholde,  
 About the towers in sundry wyse they hoved, 25  
 Wyth goodly pypes in their mouthes ituned,  
 That with the wynde they pyped a daunce,  
 Iclipped Amour de la hault plesaunce.

The toure was great, of marvelous wydnes,  
 To whyche there was no way to passe but one, 30  
 Into the toure for to have an intres;  
 A grece there was, ychesyled all of stone  
 Out of the rocke, on whiche men dyd gone  
 Up to the toure; and in lykewise dyd I,  
 Wyth bothe the grayhoundes in my company : <sup>3</sup> 35

Tyll that I came to a ryall gate,  
 Where I sawe stondynge the goodly portres,  
 Whiche axed me from whence I came a-late?  
 To whome I gan in every thyng expresse  
 All myne adventure, chaunce, and busynesse, 40  
 And eke my name I tolde her every dell.  
 When she herde this, she lyked me ryght well.

Her name, she sayd, was called COUNTENAUNCE :  
 Into the 'base' courte she dyd me then lede,  
 Where was a fountayne depured of pleasance, 45  
 A noble sprynge, a ryall conduyte-hede,  
 Made of fyne golde enameled with reed,  
 And on the toppe foure dragons blewe, and stoute  
 Thys dulcet water in foure partyes dyd spout.

Of whyche there flowed foure ryvers ryght clere, 50  
 Sweter than Nylus <sup>4</sup> or Ganges was theyr odoure,  
 Tygrys or Euphrates unto them no pere.  
 I dyd than taste the aromatyke lycoure,  
 Fragaunt of fume, swete as any floure,  
 And in my mouthe it had a marveylous cent 55  
 Of divers spyces; I knewe not what it ment.

Ver. 25, towers. P.C.

V. 44, besy courte. P.C.

V. 49, partyes. P.C.

<sup>3</sup> This alludes to a former part of the poem.

<sup>4</sup> Nysus. P. 2



And after thys farther forth me brought  
 Dame Countenaunce into a goodly hall :  
 Of jasper stones it was wonderly wrought,  
 The wyndowes cleare, depured all of crystall, 60  
 And in the rouse on hye over all  
 Of golde was made a ryght crafty vyne ;  
 Instede of grapes the rubies there did shyne.

The flore was paved with berall clarified,  
 With pillers made of stones precious, 65  
 Like a place of pleasure so gayely glorified,  
 It might be called a palaice glorious,  
 So muche delectable and solacious.

The hall was hanged, hye and circuler,  
 With cloth of arras in the rychest maner. 70

That treated well of a ful noble story,  
 Of the doubty waye to the tower perillous ;<sup>5</sup>  
 Howe a noble knyght should wyne the victory  
 Of many a serpente foule and odious :

\* \* \* \* \*



## XI.

### The Child of Elle<sup>1</sup>

is given from a fragment in the Editor's folio MS.; which, though extremely defective and mutilated, appeared to have so much merit, that it excited a strong desire to attempt a completion of the story. The reader will easily discover the supplemental stanzas by their inferiority, and at the same time be inclined to pardon it, when he considers how difficult it must be to imitate the affecting simplicity and artless beauties of the original.

*Child* was a title sometimes given to a knight. See Gloss.

On yonder hill a castle standes,  
 With walles and towres bedight,  
 And yonder lives the Child of Elle,  
 A younge and comely knighte.

<sup>5</sup> The story of the poem.

<sup>1</sup> The fragment in the folio MS. contains but thirty-nine verses, upon which Percy has founded two hundred; yet the corrections are, as Sir Walter Scott says, "in the true style of Gothic embellishment."—Editor.

- The Child of Elle to his garden wente, 5  
And stood at his garden pale,  
Whan, lo ! he beheld faire Emmelines page  
Come trippinge downe the dale.
- The Child of Elle he hyed him thence, 10  
Y-wis he stoode not stille,  
And soone he mette faire Emmelines page  
Come climbing up the hille.
- “ Nowe Christe thee save, thou little foot-page,  
Now Christe thee save and see !  
Oh telle me how does thy Ladye gaye, 15  
And what may thy tydinges bee ? ”
- “ My Lady shce is all woe-begone,  
And the teares they falle from her eyne ;  
And aye she laments the deadlye feude  
Betweene her house and thine. 20
- “ And here shee sends thee a silken scarfe,  
Bedewde with many a teare,  
And biddes thee sometimes thinke on her,  
Who loved thee so deare.
- “ And here shee sends thee a ring of golde, 25  
The last boone thou mayst have,  
And biddes thee weare it for her sake,  
Whan she is layde in grave.
- “ For, ah ! her gentle heart is broke,  
And in grave soone must shee bee, 30  
Sith her father hath chose her a new, new love,  
And forbidde her to think of thee.
- “ Her father hath brought her a carlish knight,  
Sir John of the north countraye,  
And within three dayes shee must him wedde, 35  
Or he vowes he will her slaye.”
- “ Nowe hye thee backe, thou little foot-page,  
And greet thy ladye from mee,  
And telle her that I, her owne true love,  
Will dye, or sette her free. 40



"Nowe hye thee backe, thou little foot-pago,  
And let thy fair ladye know,  
This night will I bee at her bowre-windowe,  
Betide me weale or woe."

The boye he tripped, the boye he ranne, 45  
He neither stint ne stayd,  
Untill he came to faire Emmelines bowre,  
Whan kneeling downe he sayd :

"O ladye, Ive been with thy own true love, 50  
And he greets thee well by mee ;  
This night will he bee at thy bowre-windowe,  
And dye or sette thee free."

Nowe daye was gone, and night was come,  
And all were fast asleepe,  
All save the Ladye Emmeline, 55  
Who sate in her bowre to weepe :

And soone shee heard her true loves voice  
Lowe whispering at the walle :  
"Awake, awake, my deare ladyè, 60  
'Tis I, thy true love, call."

"Awake, awake, my Ladye deare,  
Come, mount this faire palfraye :  
This ladder of ropes will lette thee downe,  
Ile carrye thee hence awaye."

"Nowe nay, nowe nay, thou gentle Knight, 65  
Nowe nay, this may not bee ;  
For aye sould I tint my maiden fame,  
If alone I should wend with thee."

"O Ladye, thou with a knight so true 70  
Mayst safelye wend alone ;  
To my ladye mother I will thee bringe,  
Where marriage shall make us one."

"My father he is a baron bolde, 75  
Of lynage proude and hye ;  
And what would he saye if his daughtèr  
Awaye with a knight should fly ?

“ Ah ! well I wot, he never would rest,  
 Nor his meate should doe him no goode,  
 Till he had slayne thee, Child of Elle,  
 And scene thy deare hearts bloode.”

30

“ O Ladye, wert thou in thy saddle sette,  
 And a little space him fro,  
 I would not care for thy cruel fathèr,  
 Nor the worst that he could doe.

“ O Ladye, wert thou in thy saddle sette,  
 And once without this walle,  
 I would not care for thy cruel fathèr,  
 Nor the worst that might befallè.”

85

Faire Emmeline sighed, faire Emmeline wept.  
 And aye her heart was woe :  
 At length he seizde her lilly-white hand,  
 And downe the ladder he drewe.

90

And thrice he claspde her to his breste,  
 And kist her tenderlie :  
 The teares that fell from her fair eyes,  
 Ranne like the fountayne free.

95

Hee mounted himselfe on his steede so talle,  
 And her on a faire palfràye,  
 And slung his bugle about his necke,  
 And roundlye they rode awaye.

100

All this beheard her owne damsèlle,  
 In her bed whereas shce ley ;  
 Quoth shee, “ My Lord shall knowe of this,  
 Soe I shall have golde and fee.

Awake, awake, thou Baron bolde !  
 Awake, my noble dame !  
 Your daughter is fledde with the Child of Elle,  
 To doe the deede of shame.”

105

The baron he woke, the baron he rose,  
 And called his merryc men all :  
 “ And come thou forth, Sir John the knightè ;  
 The ladye is carried to thrall.”

110



Faire Emmeline scant had ridden a mile,  
A mile forth of the towne,  
When she was aware of her fathers men  
Come galloping over the downe. 115

And foremost came the carlish knight,  
Sir John of the north countraye :  
“Nowe stop, nowe stop, thou false traitoure,  
Nor carry that ladye awaye. 120

“For she is come of hye lynàge,  
And was of a ladye borne,  
And ill it beseems thee, a false churles sonne,  
To carrye her hence to scorne.”

“Nowe loud thou lyeest, Sir John the knighte, 125  
Nowe thou doest lye of mee ;  
A knight mee gott, and a ladye me bore,  
Soe never did none by thee.

“But light nowe downe, my Ladye faire,  
Light downe, and hold my steed, 130  
While I and this discourteous knight  
Doe trye this arduous deede.

“But light now downe, my deare Ladyè,  
Light downe, and hold my horse ;  
While I and this discourteous knight 135  
Doe trye our valours force.”

Faire Emmeline sighde, faire Emmeline wept,  
And aye her heart was woe,  
While twixt her love and the carlish knight  
Past many a baleful blowe. 140

The Child of Elle hee fought soe well,  
As his weapon he wavde amaine,  
That soone he had slaine the carlish knight,  
And layde him upon the plaine.

And nowe the baron, and all his men 145  
Full fast approached nye :  
Ah ! what may Ladye Emmeline doe ?  
Twere now no boote to flye.

Her lover he put his horne to his mouth,  
And blew both loud and shrill, 150  
And soone he saw his owne merry men  
Come ryding over the hill.

“ Nowe hold thy hand, thou bold Baròn,  
I pray thec, hold thy hand,  
Nor ruthless rend two gentle hearts, 155  
Fast knit in true loves band.

“ Thy daughter I have dearly lovde  
Full long and many a day;  
But with such love as holy kirke  
Hath freelye sayd wee may. 160

“ O give consent shee may be mine,  
And blesse a faithfull paire;  
My lands and livings are not small,  
My house and lynage faire.

“ My mother she was an earles daughter, 165  
And a noble knyght my sire——”  
The baron he frownde, and turnde away  
With mickle dole and ire.

Faire Emmeline sighde, faire Emmeline wept.  
And did all tremblinge stand; 170  
At lengthe she sprange upon her knee,  
And held his lifted hand.

“ Pardon, my Lorde and father deare,  
This faire yong knyght and mee:  
Trust me, but for the carlish knyght, 175  
I never had fled from thee.

“ Oft have you callde your Emmeline  
Your darling and your joye;  
O let not then your harsh resolves  
Your Emmeline destroye.” 180

The baron he stroakt his dark-brown cheeke.  
And turnde his heade asyde  
To whipe awaye the starting teare,  
He proudly strave to hyde.



In deepe revolving thought he stoode,  
 And musde a little space;  
 Then raisde faire Emmeline from the grounde,  
 With many a fond embrace. 185

"Here take her, Child of Elle," he sayd,  
 And gave her lillye hand;  
 "Here take my deare and only child,  
 And with her half my lande. 190

"Thy father once mine honour wrongde,  
 In dayes of youthful pride;  
 Do thou the injurye repayre  
 In fondnesse for thy bride. 195

"And as thou love her and hold her deare,  
 Heaven prosper thee and thine;  
 And nowe my blessing wend wi' thee,  
 My lovelye Emmeline." 200

\* \* \* From the word *kirke* in ver. 159, this hath been thought to be a Scottish ballad; but it must be acknowledged that the line referred to is among the additions supplied by the Editor: besides, in the northern counties of England, *kirk* is used in the common dialect for *church*, as well as beyond the Tweed.

---

## XII.

### Edom o' Gordon,

#### A SCOTTISH BALLAD,

was printed at Glasgow, by Robert and Andrew Foulis, 1755, 8vo (twelve pages). We are indebted for its publication (with many other valuable things in these volumes) to Sir David Dalrymple, Bart., who gave it as it was preserved in the memory of a lady.

The reader will here find it improved, and enlarged with several fine stanzas, recovered from a fragment of the same ballad, in the Editor's folio MS. It is remarkable that the latter is entitled *Captain Adam Carre*, and is in the English idiom. But whether the author was English or Scotch, the difference originally was not great. The English ballads are generally of the north of England, the Scottish are of the south of Scotland; and of consequence the country of ballad-singers was sometimes subject to one crown, and sometimes to the other, and most frequently to neither. Most of the finest old

Scotch songs have the scene laid within twenty miles of England; which is indeed all poetic ground, green hills, remains of woods, clear brooks. The pastoral scenes remain: of the rude chivalry of former ages, happily nothing remains but the ruins of the castles, where the more daring and successful robbers resided. The house or castle of the RODES, stood about a measured mile south from Duns, in Berwickshire: some of the ruins of it may be seen to this day. The Gordons were anciently seated in the same county. The two villages of East and West Gordon lie about ten miles from the castle of the Rodes: <sup>1</sup> the fact, however, on which the ballad is founded, happened in the north of Scotland (see p. 130). It contains but too just a picture of the violences practised in the feudal times all over Europe.

From the different titles of this ballad, it should seem that the old strolling bards or minstrels (who gained a livelihood by reciting these poems) made no scruple of changing the names of the personages they introduced, to humour their hearers. For instance, if a Gordon's conduct was blameworthy in the opinion of that age, the obsequious minstrel would, when among Gordons, change the name to Car, whose clan or sept lay farther west, and *vice versâ*. In the third volume the reader will find a similar instance. See the song of *Gil Morris*, the hero of which had different names given him, perhaps from the same cause.

It may be proper to mention, that in the folio MS., instead of the "Castle of the Rodes," it is the "Castle of Brittons-borrow," and also "Diactours," or "Dratours-borrow," for it is very obscurely written, and "Capt. Adam Carre" is called the "Lord of Westerton-town." Uniformity required that the additional stanzas supplied from that copy should be clothed in the Scottish orthography and idiom: this has therefore been attempted, though perhaps imperfectly.

It fell about the Martinmas,  
 Quhen the wind blew shril and cauld,  
 Said Edom o' Gordon to his men,  
 "We maun draw to a hauld."

"And quhat a hauld sall we draw till,  
 My mirry men and me?  
 We wul gae to the house o' the Rodes,  
 To see that fair ladie."

The lady stude on hir castle wa',  
 Beheld baith dale and down;  
 There she was ware of a host of men,  
 Cum ryding towards the toun.

5

10

<sup>1</sup> This ballad is well known in that neighbourhood, where it is entitled *Adam o' Gordon*. It may be observed, that the famous freebooter whom Edward the First fought with, hand to hand, near Farnham, was named Adam Gordon.



“O see ze nat, my mirry men a’?  
 O see ze nat quhat I see?  
 Methinks I see a host of men :  
 I marveil quha they be.” 15

She weend it had been hir luvely lord,  
 As he cam ryding hame ;  
 It was the traitor Edom o’ Gordon,  
 Quha reekt nae sin nor shame. 20

She had nae sooner buskit hirsell,  
 And putten on hir gown,  
 Till Edom o’ Gordon and his men  
 Were round about the toun.

They had nae sooner supper sett,  
 Nae sooner said the grace,  
 Till Edom o’ Gordon and his men  
 Were light about the place. 25

The lady ran up to hir towir head,  
 Sa fast as she could hie,  
 To see if by her fair speechès,  
 She could wi’ him agree. 30

But quhan he see this lady saif,  
 And hir yates all locked fast,  
 He fell into a rage of wrath,  
 And his look was all aghast. 35

“Cum doun to me, ze lady gay,  
 Cum doun, cum doun to me ;  
 This night sall ye lig within mine armes,  
 To-morrow my bride sall be.” 40

“I winnae cum doun, ze fals Gordòn,  
 I winnae cum doun to thee ;  
 I winnae forsake my ain dear lord,  
 That is sae far frae me.”

“Give owre zour house, ze lady fair,  
 Give owre zour house to me,  
 Or I sall brenn yoursell therein,  
 Bot and zour babies three.” 45

“ I winnae give owre, ze fals Gordòn,  
 To nae sik traitor as zee ;  
 And if ze brenn my ain dear babes,  
 My lord sall make ze drie. 50

“ But reach me hether my guid bend-bowe,  
 Mine arrows one by one ;  
 For, but an I pierce that bluidy butcher,  
 My babes we been undone.” 55

She stude upon her castle wa',  
 And let twa arrows flee :  
 She mist that bluidy butchers bart,  
 And only raz'd his knee. 60

“ Set fire to the house,” quo' fals Gordòn,  
 All wood wi' dule and ire ;  
 “ Fals lady, ze sall rue this deid,  
 As ze brenn in the fire.”

“ Wae worth, wae worth ze, Jock my man,  
 I paid ze weil zour fee ;  
 Quhy pow ze out the ground-wa' stane,  
 Lets in the reek to me ? 65

“ And ein wae worth ze, Jock my man,  
 I paid ze weil zour hire ;  
 Quhy pow ze out the ground-wa' stane,  
 To me lets in the fire ? ” 70

“ Ze paid me weil my hire, lady ;  
 Ze paid me weil my fee ;  
 But now I'm Edom o' Gordons man,  
 Maun either doe or die.” 75

O than bespaik hir little son,  
 Sate on the nourice' knee,  
 Sayes, “ Mither deare, gi owre this house,  
 For the reek it smithers me.” 80

Verses 53, 54, and 58 “are restored from Foulis's edition, and the fol. MS., which last reads *the bullets*, in ver. 58.”—Percy.



"I wad gie a' my gowd, my childe,  
 Sae wad I a' my fee,  
 For ane blast o' the westlin wind,  
 To blaw the reek frae thee."

O then bespaik hir dochter dear, 85  
 She was baith jimp and sma :  
 "O row me in a pair o' sheits,  
 And tow me owre the wa."

The rowd hir in a pair o' sheits,  
 And towd hir owre the wa ; 90  
 But on the point of Gordons spear  
 She gat a deadly fa.

O bonnie, bonnie was hir mouth,  
 And cherry were hir cheiks,  
 And clear, clear was hir zellow hair, 95  
 Whereon the reid bluid dreips.

Then wi' his spear he turnd hir owre ;  
 O gin her face was wan !  
 He sayd, "Ze are the first that eir  
 I wisht alive again." 100

He turnd hir owre and owre again ;  
 O gin hir skin was whyte !  
 "I might ha spared that bonnie face,  
 To hae been sum mans delyte.

"Busk and boun, my merry men a', 105  
 For ill dooms I doe guess ;  
 I cannae luik in that bonny face,  
 As it lyes on the grass."

"Thame luiks to freits, my master deir,  
 Then freits wil follow thame ; 110  
 Let it neir be said brave Edom o' Gordon  
 Was daunted by a dame."

Ver. 98, 102. "O gin," &c., a Scottish idiom to express great admiration.  
 V. 109, 110, thame, &c., *i. e.* them that look after omens of ill luck, ill  
 luck will follow.

But quhen the ladye see the fire  
 Cum flaming owre hir head,  
 She wept and kist her children twain,  
 Sayd, "Bairns, we been but dead." 115

The Gordon then his bougill blew,  
 And said, "Awa', awa' ;  
 This house o' the Rodes is a' in flame,  
 I hauld it time to ga'." 120

O then he spyed hir ain dear lord,  
 As hec cam owr the lee ;  
 He sied his castle all in blaze  
 Sa far as he could see.

Then sair, O sair his mind misgave,  
 And all his hart was wae ;  
 "Put on, put on, my wighty men,  
 So fast as ze can gae. 125

"Put on, put on, my wighty men,  
 So fast as ze can drie ; 130  
 For he that is hindmost of the thrang,  
 Sall neir get guid o' me."

Than sum they rade, and sum they rin,  
 Fou fast out-owr the bent ;  
 But eir the foremost could get up,  
 Baith lady and babes were brent. 135

He wrang his hands, he rent his hair,  
 And wept in teenefu' muid :  
 "O traitors, for this cruel deid  
 Ze sall weep teirs o' bluid." 140

And after the Gordon he is gane,  
 Sa fast as he might drie ;  
 And soon i' the Gordon's foul hartis bluid,  
 He's wroken his dear ladie.

\* \* \* Since the foregoing ballad was first printed, the subject of it has been found recorded in Abp. Spotswood's *History of the Church of Scotland*, p. 259; who informs us, that

"Anno 1571. In the north parts of Scotland, Adam Gordon (who was deputy for his brother the Earl of Huntley) did keep a great stir;



and under colour of the queen's authority, committed divers oppressions, especially upon the Forbes's . . . . having killed Arthur Forbes, brother to the Lord Forbes. . . . Not long after he sent to summon the house of Tavoy, pertaining to Alexander Forbes. The Lady refusing to yield without direction from her husband, he put fire unto it, and burnt her therein with children and servants, being twenty-seven persons in all.

"This inhuman and barbarous cruelty made his name odious, and stained all his former doings; otherwise he was held very active and fortunate in his enterprises."

This fact, which had escaped the Editor's notice, was in the most obliging manner pointed out to him by an ingenious writer, who signs his name H. H. (Newcastle, May 9), in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for May, 1775, p. 219

## BOOK II.



## I.

**Ballads that illustrate Shakspeare.**

OUR great dramatic poet having occasionally quoted many ancient ballads, and even taken the plot of one, if not more, of his plays from among them, it was judged proper to preserve as many of these as could be recovered, and, that they might be the more easily found, to exhibit them in one collective view.

This SECOND BOOK is therefore set apart for the reception of such ballads as are quoted by Shakspeare, or contribute in any degree to illustrate his writings: this being the principal point in view, the candid reader will pardon the admission of some pieces that have no other kind of merit.

The design of this BOOK being of a dramatic tendency, it may not be improperly introduced with a few observations ON THE ORIGIN OF THE ENGLISH STAGE, and ON THE CONDUCT OF OUR FIRST DRAMATIC POETS, a subject which, though not unsuccessfully handled by several good writers already,<sup>1</sup> will yet perhaps admit of some further illustration.

## ON THE ORIGIN OF THE ENGLISH STAGE, ETC.

It is well known that dramatic poetry, in this and most other nations of Europe, owes its origin, or at least its revival, to those religious shows, which in the dark ages were usually exhibited on the more solemn festivals. At those times they were wont to represent in the churches the lives and miracles of the Saints, or some of the more important stories of Scripture. And as the most mysterious subjects were frequently chosen, such as the Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection of Christ, &c., these exhibitions acquired the general name of MYSTERIES. At first they were probably a kind of dumb shows, intermingled, it may be, with a few short speeches; at length they grew into a regular series of connected dialogues, formally divided into acts and scenes. Specimens of these in their most improved state (being at best but poor artless compositions) may be seen among Dodsley's *Old Plays*, and in Osborne's *Harleian Miscel.* How they were exhibited in

<sup>1</sup> Bp. Warburton's *Shakesp.* vol. v. p. 338.—Pref. to Dodsley's *Old Plays*.—Riccoboni's *Acct. of Theat. of Europe*, &c. &c. These were all the author had seen when he first drew up this Essay.



their most simple form, we may learn from an ancient novel, often quoted by our old dramatic poets,<sup>2</sup> entitled . . . **a merve Best of a man that was called Howleglas**,<sup>3</sup> &c., being a translation from the Dutch language, in which he is named *Ulenpiegel*. Howleglas, whose waggish tricks are the subject of this book, after many adventures comes to live with a priest, who makes him his parish-clerk. This priest is described as keeping a *leman*, or concubine, who had but one eye, to whom Howleglas owed a grudge for revealing his rogueries to his master. The story thus proceeds. . . . "And than in the meane season, while Howleglas was parysh clarke, at Easter they should play the Resurrection of our Lorde: and for because than the men wer not learned, nor could not read, the priest toke his leman, and put her in the grave for an Aungel: and this seing Howleglas, toke to him iij of the simplest persons that were in the towne, that played the iij Maries; and the person [i. e. parson or rector] played Christe, with a baner in his hand. Than saide Howleglas to the symple persons: Whan the Aungel asketh you, whom you seke, you may saye, The parsons leman with one iye. Than it fortuneth that the tyme was come that they must playe, and the Aungel asked them whom they sought; and than sayd they, as Howleglas had shewed and lerned them afore, and than answered they, We seke the priests leman with one iye. And than the prieste might heare that he was mocked. And whan the priestes leman herd that, she arose out of the grave, and would have smyten with her fist Howleglas upon the cheke, but she missed him and smote one of the simple persons that played one of the thre Maries; and he gave her another; and than toke she him by the heare [hair]; and that seing his wyfe, came running hastely to smite the priestes leman; and than the priest seeing this, caste down hys baner and went to helpe his woman, so that the one gave the other sore strokes, and made great noyse in the churche. And than Howleglas seying them lyinge together by the cares in the bodi of the churche, went his way out of the village, and came no more there."<sup>4</sup>

As the old Mysteries frequently required the representation of some allegorical personage, such as Death, Sin, Charity, Faith, and the like, by degrees the rude poets of those unlettered ages began to form complete dramatic pieces, consisting entirely of such personifications. These they entitled *Moral Plays*, or *Moralities*. The Mysteries were very inartificial, representing the Scripture stories simply according to the letter. But the Moralities are not devoid of invention: they exhibit outlines of the dramatic art; they contain something of a fable or plot, and even attempt to delineate characters and manners. I have now before me two that were printed early in the reign of Henry VIII.; in which I think one may plainly discover the seeds of Tragedy

<sup>2</sup> See Ben Jonson's *Poetaster*, act iii. sc. 4, and his *Masque of The Fortunate Isles*. Whalley's edit. vol. ii. p. 49, vol. vi. p. 190.

<sup>3</sup> Howleglas is said in the Preface to have died in M.CCCC.L. At the end of the book, M.CCC.L.

<sup>4</sup> *C. Imprinted . . . by Wyllyam Copland: without date, in 4to bl. let. among Mr. Garrick's Old Plays, K. vol. x.*



and Comedy : for which reason I shall give a short analysis of them both.

One of them is entitled *Every Man*.<sup>5</sup> The subject of this piece is the summoning of Man out of the world by Death ; and its moral, that nothing will then avail him but a well-spent life and the comforts of religion. This subject and moral are opened in a monologue spoken by the *Messenger* (for that was the name generally given by our ancestors to the prologue on their rude stage) : then God<sup>6</sup> is represented ; who, after some general complaints on the degeneracy of mankind, calls for *Deth*, and orders him to bring before his tribunal *Every-man*, for so is called the personage who represents the human race. *Every-man* appears, and receives the summons with all the marks of confusion and terror. When *Deth* is withdrawn, *Every-man* applies for relief in this distress to *Fellowship*, *Kindred*, *Goods*, or *Riches*, but they successively renounce and forsake him. In this disconsolate state he betakes himself to *Good-dedes*, who, after upbraiding him with his long neglect of her,<sup>7</sup> introduces him to her sister *Knowledge*, and she leads him to the "holy man, *Confession*," who appoints him penance : this he inflicts upon himself on the stage, and then withdraws to receive the sacraments of the priest. On his return he begins to wax faint, and after *Strength*, *Beauty*, *Discretion*, and *Five Wits*<sup>8</sup> have all taken their final leave of him, gradually expires on the stage ; *Good-dedes* still accompanying him to the last. Then an *Aungell* descends to sing his *requiem* : and the epilogue is spoken by a person called *Doctour*, who recapitulates the whole, and delivers the moral :

"*C*. This memoriall men may have in mynde,  
Ye herers, take it of worth old and yonge,  
And forsake Pryde, for he disceyveth you in thende,  
And remembre Beautè, Five Witts, Strength, and Discrecion,  
They all at last do Every-man forsake ;  
Save his Good Dedes there dothe he take :  
But beware, for and they be small,  
Before God he hath no helpe at all," &c.

From this short analysis it may be observed, that *Every Man* is a grave solemn piece, not without some rude attempts to excite terror and pity, and therefore may not improperly be referred to the class of Tragedy. It is remarkable, that in this old simple drama the fable is conducted upon the strictest model of the Greek Tragedy. The action is simply one ; the time of action is that of the performance ; the scene is never changed, nor the stage ever empty. *Every-man*, the hero of

<sup>5</sup> This play has been reprinted by Mr. Hawkins in his *Origin of the English Drama*, 3 vols. 12mo, Oxford, 1773. See vol. i. p. 27.

<sup>6</sup> The second person of the Trinity seems to be meant.

<sup>7</sup> Those above mentioned are male characters.

<sup>8</sup> i. e. The five Senses. These are frequently exhibited as five distinct personages upon the Spanish stage (see Riccoboni, p. 98) ; but our moralist has represented them all by one character.



the piece, after his first appearance, never withdraws, except when he goes out to receive the sacraments, which could not well be exhibited in public; and during his absence, *Knowledge* descants on the excellence and power of the priesthood, somewhat after the manner of the Greek chorus. And, indeed, except in the circumstance of *Every-man's* expiring on the stage, the "Samson Agonistes" of Milton is hardly formed on a severer plan.<sup>9</sup>

The other play is entitled *Hick-scorner*,<sup>1</sup> and bears no distant resemblance to Comedy: its chief aim seems to be to exhibit characters and manners, its plot being much less regular than the foregoing. The prologue is spoken by *Pity*, represented under the character of an aged pilgrim; he is joined by *Contemplacyon* and *Perseverance*, two holy men, who, after lamenting the degeneracy of the age, declare their resolution of stemming the torrent. *Pity* then is left upon the stage, and presently found by *Frewyll*, representing a lewd debauchee, who, with his dissolute companion *Imaginacion*, relate their manner of life, and not without humour describe the stews and other places of base resort. They are presently joined by *Hick-scorner*, who is drawn as a libertine returned from travel, and, agreeably to his name, scoffs at religion. These three are described as extremely vicious, who glory in every act of wickedness; at length two of them quarrel, and *Pity* endeavours to part the fray; on this they fall upon him, put him in the stocks, and there leave him. *Pity*, thus imprisoned, descants in a kind of lyric measure on the profligacy of the age, and in this situation he is found by *Perseverance* and *Contemplacyon*, who set him at liberty, and advise him to go in search of the delinquents. As soon as he is gone *Frewyll* appears again; and, after relating in a very comic manner some of his rogueries and escapes from justice, is rebuked by the two holy men, who, after a long altercation, at length convert him and his libertine companion *Imaginacion* from their vicious course of life; and then the play ends with a few verses from *Perseverance*, by way of epilogue. This, and every Morality I have seen, conclude with a solemn prayer. They are all of them in rhyme; in a kind of loose stanza, intermixed with distichs.

It would be needless to point out the absurdities in the plan and conduct of the foregoing play; they are evidently great. It is sufficient to observe, that, bating the moral and religious reflection of *Pity*, &c., the piece is of a comic cast, and contains a humorous display of some of the vices of the age. Indeed the author has generally been so little attentive to the allegory, that we need only substitute other names to his personages, and we have real characters and living manners.

We see, then, that the writers of these moralities were upon the very threshold of real Tragedy and Comedy; and therefore we are not to wonder that tragedies and comedies in form soon after took place,

<sup>9</sup> See more of *Every-Man*, p. 95. Pref. to b. 5. Note.

<sup>1</sup> Emprynted by me Wynkyn de Worde, no date; in 4to bl. let. This play has also been reprinted by Mr. Hawkins in his *Origin of the English Drama*, vol. i. p. 69.



especially as the revival of learning about this time brought them acquainted with the Roman and Grecian models.

II. At what period of time the Moralities had their rise here, it is difficult to discover; but plays of Miracles appear to have been exhibited in England soon after the Conquest. Matthew Paris tells us, that Geoffrey, afterwards Abbot of St. Alban's, a Norman, who had been sent for over by Abbot Richard to take upon him the direction of the school of that monastery, coming too late, went to Dunstable, and taught in the abbey there; where he caused to be acted (probably by his scholars) a MIRACLE-PLAY OF ST. CATHARINE, composed by himself.<sup>2</sup> This was long before the year 1119, and probably within the eleventh century. The above play of ST. CATHARINE was, for aught that appears, the first spectacle of this sort that was exhibited in these kingdoms; and an eminent French writer thinks it was even the first attempt towards the revival of dramatic entertainments in all Europe; being long before the representations of Mysteries in France, for these did not begin till the year 1398.<sup>3</sup>

But whether they derived their origin from the above exhibition or not, it is certain that holy plays, representing the miracles and sufferings of the Saints, appear to have been no novelty in the reign of Henry II., and a lighter sort of interludes were not then unknown.<sup>4</sup> In Chaucer's time, "Plays of Miracles" in Lent were the common resort of idle gossips.<sup>5</sup> They do not appear to have been so prevalent on the continent, for the learned historian of the Council of Constance<sup>6</sup> ascribes to the English the introduction of plays into Germany. He tells us that the emperor, having been absent from the council for some time, was, at his return, received with great rejoicings; and that the English

<sup>2</sup> *Apud Dunestapliam . . . . quendam ludum de sancta Katerina (quem MIRACULA vulgariter appellamus) fecit. Ad quæ decoranda, petiit a sacrista sancti Albani, ut sibi Capæ Chorales accommodarentur, et obtinuit. Et fuit ludus ille de sancta Katerina. Vitæ Abbat. ad fin. Hist. Mat. Paris, folio, 1639, p. 56.* We see here that Plays of Miracles were become common enough in the time of Mat. Paris, who flourished about 1240; but that indeed appears from the more early writings of Fitz-Stephens, quoted below.

<sup>3</sup> Vide *Abrégé Chron. de l'Hist. de France*, par M. Henault, à l'ann. 1179.

<sup>4</sup> See Fitz-Stephens's Description of London, preserved by Stow, *Londonia pro spectaculis theatralibus, pro ludis scenicis, ludos habet sanctiores, representationes miraculorum, &c.* He is thought to have written in the reign of Henry II., and to have died in that of Richard I. It is true at the end of this book we find mentioned *Henricum regem tertium*; but this is doubtless Henry the Second's son, who was crowned during the life of his father, in 1170, and is generally distinguished as *Rex juvenis*, *Rex filius*, and sometimes they were jointly named *Reges Angliæ*. From a passage in his *Chap. De Religione*, it should seem that the body of St. Thomas à Becket was just then a new acquisition to the church of Canterbury.

<sup>5</sup> See Prologue to *Wife of Bath's Tale*, v. 6137, Tyrwhitt's ed.

<sup>6</sup> M. L'Enfant. Vide *Hist. du Conc. de Constance*, vol. ii. p. 440.



Fathers in particular did, upon that occasion, cause a sacred comedy to be acted before him on Sunday, January 31st, 1417; the subjects of which were:—THE NATIVITY OF OUR SAVIOUR; THE ARRIVAL OF THE EASTERN MAGI; and THE MASSACRE BY HEROD. Thence it appears, says this writer, that the Germans are obliged to the English for the invention of this sort of spectacles, unknown to them before that period.

The fondness of our ancestors for dramatic exhibitions of this kind, and some curious particulars relating to this subject, will appear from the *HOUSEHOLD-BOOK* of the fifth Earl of Northumberland, A.D. 1512,<sup>7</sup> whence I shall select a few extracts, which show that the exhibiting Scripture Dramas on the great festivals entered into the regular establishment, and formed part of the domestic regulations of our ancient nobility: and, what is more remarkable, that it was as much the business of the Chaplain in those days to compose PLAYS for the family, as it is now for him to make sermons.

“My Lordes Chapleyns in Household vj. viz. The Almonar, and if he be a maker of INTERLUDYS, than he to have a servaunt to the intent for writynge of the PARTS; and ells to have non. The maister of Gramer,” &c.—*Sect. v. p. 44.*

“Item.—My lorde usith and accustomyth to gyf yerely, if is lordship kepe a chapell and be at home, them of his lordschipes chapell, if they doo play the Play of the NATIVITE uppon Cristynmes day in the mornynge in my lords chappell before his lordship,—xxs.”—*Sect. xlv. p. 343.*

“Item . . . to them of his lordship chappell and others his lordshipis servaunts that doeth play the Play before his lordship upon SHROFTESDAY at night yerely in reward—xs.”—*Ibid. p. 345.*

“Item . . . to them . . . that playth the Play of RESURRECTION upon Estur day in the mornynge in my lordis ‘chapell’ before his lordship—xxs.”—*Ibid.*

“Item.—My lorde useth and accustomyth yerly to gyf hym which is ordynede to be the MASTER OF THE REVELLS yerly in my lordis hous in Cristmas for the overseyinge and orderinge of his lordships Playes, Interludes, and Dresinge that is plaid before his lordship in his hous in the xijth dayes of Cristenmas, and they to have in rewarde for that caus yerly—xxs.”—*Ibid. p. 346.*

“Item.—My lorde useth and accustomyth to gyf every of the iiij Parsones that his lordship admyted as his PLAYERS to com to his lordship yerly at Cristynmes ande at all other such tymes as his lordship shall commande them for playing of Playe and Interludes affor his lordship, in his lordshipis hous for every of their fees for an hole yere—. . .”—*Ibid. p. 351.*

“Item.—To be payd . . . for rewards to PLAYERS for Plays playd at

<sup>7</sup> “The regulations and establishments of the household of Hen. Alg. Percy, 5th Earl of Northumb. Lond. 1770,” 8vo. Whereof a small impression was printed by order of the late Duke and Duchess of Northumberland to bestow in presents to their friends. Although begun in 1512, some of the regulations were composed so late as 1525.



Christynmas by Stranegeres in my house after xx<sup>d</sup>.<sup>8</sup> every play, by estimacion somme xxxiijs. iiij.”<sup>9</sup>—*Sect. i. p. 22.*

“Item.—My lorde usith, and accustometh to gif yerely when his lordshipp is at home, to every erlis Players that comes to his lordshipe betwixt Cristynmas ande Candelmas, if he be his special lorde and frende and kynsman—xxs.”—*Sect. xlv. p. 340.*

“Item.—My lorde usith and accustomyth to gyf yerely when his lordship is at home to every lordis PLAYERS, that comyth to his lordshipe betwixt Crystynmas ande Candelmas—xs.”—*Ibid.*

The reader will observe the great difference in the rewards here given to such Players as were retainers of noble personages, and such as are styled Strangers, or, as we may suppose, only strollers. The profession of the common player was about this time held by some in low estimation. In an old satire entitled *Cock Lorreles Bote*,<sup>1</sup> the author, enumerating the most common trades or callings, as carpenters, coopers, joiners, &c., mentions

“*Players, purse-cutters, money-batterers,  
Golde-washers, tomblers, jogelers,  
Pardoners,*” &c.—*Sign. B. vj.*

III. It hath been observed already that plays of Miracles, or Mysteries, as they were called, led to the introduction of Moral Plays, or Moralities, which prevailed so early, and became so common, that towards the latter end of King Henry the VIIth’s reign John Rastel, brother-in-law to Sir Thomas More, conceived a design of making them the vehicle of science and natural philosophy. With this view he published ‘*C. A new interlude and a mery of the nature of the iii elements declarynge many proper points of philosophy naturall, and of dyvers straunge landes,*’<sup>2</sup> &c. It is observable that the poet speaks of the discovery of America as then recent:

— “Within this xx yere  
Westwarde be founde new landes,  
That we never harde tell of before this,” &c.

The West Indies were discovered by Columbus in 1492, which fixes

<sup>8</sup> This was not so small a sum then as it may now appear; for in another part of the MS. the price ordered to be given for a fat ox is but 13s. 4d., and for a lean one 8s.

<sup>9</sup> At this rate, the number of Plays acted must have been twenty.

<sup>1</sup> Pr. at the Sun in Fleet-street, by W de Worde: no date, b. l. 4to.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Garrick has an imperfect copy (*Old Plays*, l. vol. iii.). The Dramatis Personæ are, “*C. The Messengere [or Prologue] Nature naturate. Humanytè. Studyous Desire. Sensuall Appetyte. The Taverner. Experyence. Ygnoraunce.* (Also yf ye lyste ye may brynge in a dysgysynge.”) Afterwards follows a table of the matters handled in the interlude. Among which are “*C. Of certeyn conclusions prouvyng the yerthe must nedes be rounde, and that it hengyth in the myddes of the fyrmament, and that yt is in circumference above xxi M. myle.*”——



the writing of this play to about 1510 (two years before the date of the above Household-Book). The play of *Wick-Sorner* was probably somewhat more ancient, as he still more imperfectly alludes to the American discoveries, under the name of "the Newe founde Ilonde." Sign. A. vij.

It is observable that in the older Moralities, as in that last mentioned, *Every-man*, &c., there is printed no kind of stage direction for the exits and entrances of the personages, no division of acts and scenes. But in the moral interlude of *Lusty Juventus*,<sup>3</sup> written under Edward VI., the exits and entrances begin to be noted in the margin :<sup>4</sup> at length in Queen Elizabeth's reign, Moralities appeared formally divided into acts and scenes, with a regular prologue, &c. One of these is reprinted by Dodsley.

Before we quit this subject of the very early printed Plays, it may just be observed that, although so few are now extant, it should seem many were printed before the reign of Queen Elizabeth; as at the beginning of her reign, her INJUNCTIONS, in 1559, are particularly directed to the suppressing of "many Pamphlets, PLAYES, and Ballads; that no manner of person shall enterprize to print any such," &c., but under certain restrictions.—*Vide* Sect. v.

In the time of Henry VIII. one or two dramatic pieces had been published under the classical names of Comedy and Tragedy,<sup>5</sup> but they appear not to have been intended for popular use: it was not till the religious ferments had subsided that the public had leisure to attend to dramatic poetry. In the reign of Elizabeth, tragedies and comedies began to appear in form, and could the poets have persevered, the first models were good. *Corboduc*, a regular tragedy, was acted in 1561 ;<sup>6</sup>

"C. Of certeyne points of cosmographie—and of dyvers straunge regyons,—and of the new found landys and the maner of the people." This part is extremely curious, as it shows what notions were entertained of the new American discoveries by our own countrymen.

<sup>3</sup> Described in Preface to book 5. The Dramatis Personæ of this piece are, "C. Messenger. Lusty Juventus. Good Counsaill. Knowledge. Sathan the devyll. Hypocrisie. Fellowship. Abominable-lyving [an Harlot]. God's-merciful-promises."

<sup>4</sup> I have also discovered some few *Exeats* and *Intrats* in the very old Interlude of the *Four Elements*.

<sup>5</sup> Bp. Bale had applied the name of Tragedy to his Mystery of *Gods Promises*, in 1538. In 1540, John Palsgrave, B.D., had republished a Latin comedy called *Acolastus*, with an English version. Holingshed tells us (vol. iii. p. 850,) that so early as 1520, the king had "a goodlie comedie of Plautus plaied" before him at Greenwich; but this was in Latin, as Mr. Farmer informs us in his curious "Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare," 8vo, p. 31.

<sup>6</sup> See Ames, p. 316. This play appears to have been first printed under the name of *Corboduc*; then under that of *Ferrer* and *Horrer*, &c. 1569; and again, under *Corboduc*, 1590. Ames calls the first edition 4to; Langbaine, 8vo; and Tanner, 12mo.



and Gascoigne, in 1566, exhibited *Jocasta*, a translation from Euripides as also *The Supposers*, a regular comedy, from Ariosto: near thirty years before any of Shakespeare's were printed.

The people, however, still retained a relish for their old *Mysteries* and *Moralities*,<sup>7</sup> and the popular dramatic poets seem to have made them their models. The graver sort of *Moralities* appear to have given birth to our modern Tragedy; as our Comedy evidently took its rise from the lighter interludes of that kind. And as most of these pieces contain an absurd mixture of religion and buffoonery, an eminent critic<sup>8</sup> has well deduced from thence the origin of our unnatural Tragi-comedies. Even after the people had been accustomed to tragedies and comedies, *Moralities* still kept their ground; one of them entitled *The New Custom*,<sup>9</sup> was printed so late as 1573: at length they assumed the name of *Masques*<sup>1</sup> and with some classical improvements became, in the two following reigns, the favourite entertainments of the court.

IV. The old *Mysteries*, which ceased to be acted after the Reformation, appear to have given rise to a third species of stage exhibition, which, though now confounded with Tragedy and Comedy, were by our first dramatic writers considered as quite distinct from them both: these were *Historical Plays*, or *HISTORIES*, a species of dramatic writing, which resembled the old *Mysteries* in representing a series of historical events, simply in the order of time in which they happened, without any regard to the three great unities. These pieces seem to differ from Tragedies, just as much as historical poems do from epic: as the *Pharsalia* does from the *Æneid*.

What might contribute to make dramatic poetry take this form was that soon after the *Mysteries* ceased to be exhibited there was published a large collection of poetical narratives, called *The Mirrour for Magistrates*,<sup>2</sup> wherein a great number of the most eminent characters in English history are drawn relating their own misfortunes. This book was popular, and of a dramatic cast, and therefore, as an elegant writer<sup>3</sup> has well observed, might have its influence in producing *Historical Plays*. These narratives probably furnished the subjects, and the ancient *Mysteries* suggested the plan.

There appears indeed to have been one instance of an attempt at an *HISTORICAL PLAY* itself, which was perhaps as early as any *Mystery* on a religious subject; for such, I think, we may pronounce the representation of a memorable event in English history, that was *EXPRESSED IN ACTION AND RHYMES*. This was the old Coventry play of *Wick*

<sup>7</sup> The general reception the old *Moralities* had upon the stage, will account for the fondness of all our first poets for allegory. Subjects of this kind were familiar to everybody.

<sup>8</sup> Bp. Warburt. Shakspeare, vol. v.

<sup>9</sup> Reprinted among Dodsley's *Old Plays*, vol. i.

<sup>1</sup> In some of these appeared characters full as extraordinary as in any of the old *Moralities*. In Ben Jonson's *Masque of Christmas*, 1616 one of the personages is *Mincea Pie*.

<sup>2</sup> The first part of which was printed in 1559.

<sup>3</sup> Walpole, *Catal. of Royal and Noble Authors*, vol. i. p. 166, 7.



**Tuesdāy**,<sup>4</sup> founded on the story of the massacre of the Danes, as it happened on St. Brice's night, November 13th, 1002.<sup>5</sup> The play in question was performed by certain men of Coventry among the other shows and entertainments at Kenilworth Castle in July, 1575, prepared for Queen Elizabeth; and this the rather, "because the matter mentioneth how valiantly our English women, for the love of their country, behaved themselves."

The writer, whose words are here quoted,<sup>6</sup> hath given a short description of the performance; which seems on that occasion to have been without recitation or rhymes, and reduced to mere dumb-show; consisting of violent skirmishes and encounters, first between Danish and English, "lance-knights on horseback," armed with spear and shield; and afterwards between "hosts" of footmen: which at length ended in the Danes being "beaten down, overcome, and many led captive by our English women."<sup>7</sup>

This play, it seems, which was wont to be exhibited in their city yearly, and which had been of great antiquity and long continuance there,<sup>8</sup> had of late been suppressed, at the instance of some well-meaning but precise preachers, of whose "sourness" herein the townsmen complain; urging that their play was "without example of ill manners, papistry, or any superstition;"<sup>9</sup> which shows it to have been entirely distinct from a religious Mystery. But having been discontinued, and, as appears from the narrative, taken up of a sudden after the sports were begun, the players apparently had not been able to recover the old rhymes, or to procure new ones, to accompany the action; which, if it originally represented "the outrage and importable insolency of the Danes, the grievous complaint of Huma, King Ethelred's chieftain in wars:"<sup>1</sup> his counselling and contriving the plot to dispatch them; con-

<sup>4</sup> This must not be confounded with the Mysteries acted on Corpus Christi day by the Franciscans at Coventry, which were also called COVENTRY PLAYS, and of which an account is given from T. Warton's *History of English Poetry*, &c., in Malone's *Shakspeare*, vol. ii. part ii. pp. 13, 14.

<sup>5</sup> Not 1012, as printed in Laneham's letter, mentioned below.

<sup>6</sup> Ro. Laneham, whose LETTER containing a full description of the Shows, &c., is reprinted at large in Nichols's "Progresses of Queen Elizabeth," &c., vol. i. 4to, 1788. That writer's orthography being peculiar and affected, is not here followed.

Laneham describes this play of **Mock Tuesdāy**, which was "presented in an historical cue by certain good-hearted men of Coventry" (p. 32), and which was "wont to be play'd in their citie yearly" (p. 33), as if it were peculiar to them, terming it "THEIR old storial show" (p. 32). And so it might be as represented and expressed by them "after their manner" (p. 33), although we are also told by Bevil Higgons, that St. Brice's EVE was still celebrated by the northern English in commemoration of this massacre of the Danes, the women beating brass instruments, and singing old rhymes, in praise of their cruel ancestors. See his *Short View of Eng. History*, 8vo, p. 17. (The Preface is dated 1734.)

<sup>7</sup> Laneham, p. 37.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p. 33.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 32.



cluding with the conflicts above mentioned, and their final suppression, "expressed in actions and rhymes" after their manner,<sup>2</sup> one can hardly conceive a more regular model of a complete drama, and if taken up soon after the event, it must have been the earliest of the kind in Europe.<sup>3</sup>

Whatever this old play, or "storial show,"<sup>4</sup> was at the time it was exhibited to Queen Elizabeth, it had probably our young Shakspeare for a spectator, who was then in his twelfth year, and doubtless attended with all the inhabitants of the surrounding country at these "princely pleasures of Kenelworth,"<sup>5</sup> whence Stratford is only a few miles distant. And as the queen was much diverted with the Coventry Play, "whereat Her Majesty laught well," and rewarded the performers with two bucks, and five marks in money: who, "what rejoicing upon their ample reward, and what triumphing upon the good acceptance, vaunted their Play was never so dignified, nor ever any Players before so beatified:" but especially if our young bard afterwards gained admittance into the castle to see a Play, which the same evening, after supper, was there "presented of a very good theme, but so set forth by the actors' well-handling, that pleasure and mirth made it seem very short, though it lasted two good hours and more,"<sup>6</sup> we may imagine what an impression was made on his infant mind. Indeed, the dramatic cast of many parts of that superb entertainment, which continued nineteen days, and was the most splendid of the kind ever attempted in this kingdom; the addresses to the queen in the personated characters of a Sybille, a Savage Man, and Sylvanus, as she approached or departed from the castle; and, on the water, by Arion, a Triton, or the Lady of the Lake, must have had a very great effect on a young imagination, whose dramatic powers were hereafter to astonish the world.

But that the Historical Play was considered by our old writers, and by Shakspeare himself, as distinct from Tragedy and Comedy, appears from numberless passages of their works. "Of late days," says Stow, "instead of those Stage-Playes<sup>7</sup> hath been used Comedies, Tragedies, Enterludes, and HISTORIES, both true and fayned."—*Survey of London*.<sup>8</sup> Beaumont and Fletcher, in the prologue to *The Captain*, say,

"This is nor Comedy, nor Tragedy,  
Nor HISTORY."

Polonius in *Hamlet* commends the actors, as the best in the world,

<sup>2</sup> Laneham, p. 33.

<sup>3</sup> The rhymes, &c., prove this play to have been in English; whereas Mr. Thomas Warton thinks the Mysteries composed before 1328 were in Latin. Malone's *Shaksp.* vol. ii. pt. ii. p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Laneham, p. 32.

<sup>5</sup> See Nichols's *Progresses*, vol. i. p. 57.

<sup>6</sup> Laneham, p. 38, 39. This was on *Sunday* evening, July 9.

<sup>7</sup> The Creation of the World, acted at Skinners-well in 1409.

<sup>8</sup> See Stow's *Survey of London*, 1603, 4to, p. 94 (said in the title-page to be "written in 1598"). See also Warton's *Observations on Spenser*, vol. ii. p. 109.



"either for Tragedie, Comedie, Historie, Pastorall," &c. And Shakspeare's friends, Heminge and Condell, in the first folio edition of his Plays, in 1623,<sup>9</sup> have not only entitled their book "Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, HISTORIES, and Tragedies," but in their table of contents have arranged them under those three several heads; placing in the class of Histories, "King John, Richard II., Henry IV. two parts, Henry V., Henry VI. three parts, Richard III., and Henry VIII.;" to which they might have added such of his other Plays as have their subjects taken from the old Chronicles, or Plutarch's Lives.

Although Shakspeare is found not to have been the first who invented this species of drama,<sup>1</sup> yet he cultivated it with such superior success, and threw upon this simple inartificial tissue of scenes such a blaze of genius, that his HISTORIES maintain their ground in defiance of Aristotle and all the critics of the classic school, and will ever continue to interest and instruct an English audience.

Before Shakspeare wrote, Historical Plays do not appear to have attained this distinction, being not mentioned in Queen Elizabeth's licence, in 1574,<sup>2</sup> to James Burbage and others, who are only empowered "to use, exercyse, and occupie the arte and facultye of playenge Comedies, Tragedies, Enterludes, Stage-Playes, and such other like." But when Shakspeare's HISTORIES had become the ornaments of the stage, they were considered by the public, and by himself, as a formal and necessary species, and are thenceforth so distinguished in public instruments. They are particularly inserted in the licence granted by King James I. in 1603<sup>3</sup> to W. Shakspeare himself, and the Players his fellows, who are authorised "to use and exercise the arte and faculty of playing Comedies, Tragedies, HISTORIES, Interludes, Morals, Pastorals, Stage-Plaies, and such like." The same merited distinction they continued to maintain after his death, till the theatre itself was extinguished; for they are expressly mentioned in a warrant in 1622, for licensing certain "late Comedians of Queen Anne deceased, to bring up children in the qualitie and exercise of playing Comedies, *Histories*, Interludes, Morals, Pastorals, Stage-Plaies, and such like."<sup>4</sup> The same appears in an admonition issued in 1637,<sup>5</sup> by Philip, Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, then Lord Chamberlain, to the Master and Wardens of the Company of Printers and Stationers: wherein is set forth the complaint of His Majesty's servants the Players, that

<sup>9</sup> The same distinction is continued in the 2d and 3d folios, &c.

<sup>1</sup> See Malone's *Shaksp.* vol. i. part ii. p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. vol. i. part ii. p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. vol. i. part ii. p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 49. Here *Histories*, or Historical Plays, are found totally to have excluded the mention of Tragedies; a proof of their superior popularity. In an order for the king's comedians to attend King Charles I. in his summer's progress, 1636 (ibid. p. 144), *Histories* are not particularly mentioned; but so neither are Tragedies: they being briefly directed to "act Playes, Comedyes, and Interludes, without any lett," &c.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. p. 139.



"diverse of their books of Comedyes and Tragedies, CHRONICLE-HISTORIES, and the like," had been printed and published to their prejudice, &c.

This distinction, we see, prevailed for near half a century; but after the Restoration, when the Stage revived for the entertainment of a new race of auditors, many of whom had been exiled in France, and formed their taste from the French theatre, Shakspeare's HISTORIES appear to have been no longer relished; at least, the distinction respecting them is dropped in the patents that were immediately granted after the king's return.

This appears, not only from the allowance to Mr. William Beeston, in June 1660,<sup>6</sup> to use the house in Salisbury Court "for a Play-house, wherein Comedies, Tragedies, Tragi-Comedies, Pastoralls, and Interludes, may be acted," but also from the fuller grant (dated August 21, 1670),<sup>7</sup> to Thomas Killigrew, Esq., and Sir William Davenant, Knight, by which they have authority to erect two companies of players, and to fit up two theatres "for the representation of Tragydies, Comedyes, Playes, Operas, and all other entertainments of that nature."

But while Shakspeare was the favourite dramatic poet, his HISTORIES had such superior merit, that he might well claim to be the chief, if not the only historic dramatist that kept possession of the English stage; which gives a strong support to the tradition mentioned by Gildon,<sup>8</sup> that, in a conversation with Ben Jonson, our bard vindicated his Historical Plays, by urging, that as he had found "the nation in general very ignorant of history, he wrote them in order to instruct the people in this particular." This is assigning not only a good motive, but a very probable reason for his preference of this species of composition; since we cannot doubt but his illiterate countrymen would not only want such instruction when he first began to write, notwithstanding the obscure dramatic chroniclers who precede him, but also that they would highly profit by his admirable Lectures on English History, so long as he continued to deliver them to his audience; and as it implies no claim to his being the *first* who introduced our chronicles on the stage, I see not why the tradition should be rejected.

Upon the whole we have had abundant proof that both Shakspeare and his contemporaries considered his HISTORIES, or Historical Plays, as of a legitimate distinct species, sufficiently separate from Tragedy and Comedy; a distinction which deserves the particular attention of his critics and commentators, who, by not adverting to it, deprive him of his proper defence and best vindication for his neglect of the unities, and departure from the classical dramatic forms: for, if it be the first canon of sound criticism to examine any work by whatever rule the author prescribed for his own observance, then we ought not to try Shakspeare's HISTORIES by the general laws of Tragedy or Comedy. Whether the rule itself be vicious or not, is another inquiry; but certainly we ought to examine a work only by those principles ac-

<sup>6</sup> This is believed to be the date by Mr. Malone, vol. ii. part ii. p. 239.

<sup>7</sup> Malone, vol. ii. pt. ii. p. 244.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. vol. vi. p. 427.



ording to which it was composed. This would save a deal of impertinent criticism.

V. We have now brought the inquiry as low as was intended, but cannot quit it without entering into a short description of what may be called the Economy of the ancient English Stage.

Such was the fondness of our forefathers for dramatic entertainments, that not fewer than *nineteen* play-houses had been opened before the year 1633, when Prynne published his *Histriomastix*.<sup>9</sup> From this writer it should seem that "tobacco, wine, and beer,"<sup>1</sup> were in those days the usual accommodations in the theatre.

With regard to the players themselves, the several companies were (as hath been already shown<sup>2</sup>) retainers, or menial servants to particular noblemen,<sup>3</sup> who protected them in the exercise of their pro-

<sup>9</sup> He speaks, in p. 492, of the play-houses in Bishopsgate-street and on Ludgate-hill, which are not among the seventeen enumerated in the Preface to Dodsley's *Old Plays*. Nay, it appears from Rymer's MSS. that *twenty-three* Play-houses had been at different periods open in London; and even *six* of them at one time.—See Malone's *Shakspeare*, vol. i. pt. ii. p. 48.

<sup>1</sup> So, I think, we may infer from the following passage, viz. "How many are there, who, according to their several qualities, spend 2d. 3d. 4d. 6d. 12d. 18d. 2s. and sometimes 4s. or 5s. at a play-house, day by day, if coach-hire, boat-hire, tobacco, wine, beere, and such like vaine expenses, which playes doe usually occasion, be cast into the reckoning?"—Prynne's *Histriomastix*, p. 322.

But that tobacco was smoked in the play-houses, appears from Taylor the Water-poet, in his Proclamation for Tobacco's Propagation. "Let *Play-houses*, drinking-schools, taverns, &c., be continually haunted with the contaminous vapours of it; nay (if it be possible), bring it into the CHURCHES, and there choak up their preachers."—Works, p. 253. And this was really the case at Cambridge: James I. sent a letter in 1607, against "taking tobacco" in St. Mary's. So I learn from my friend Mr. Farmer.

A gentleman has informed me, that once going into a church in Holland, he saw the male part of the audience sitting with their hats on, smoking tobacco, while the preacher was holding forth in his morning-gown.

<sup>2</sup> See the extracts above in p. 93, from the E. of Northum. Houshold-Book.

<sup>3</sup> See the Preface to Dodsley's *Old Plays*. The author of an old invective against the Stage, called *A third Blast of Retrait from Plaies, &c.*, 1580, 12mo, says, "Alas! that private affection should so raigne in the nobilitie, that to pleasure their servants, and to upholde them in their vanitye, they should restraine the magistrates from executing their office! . . . They [the nobility] are thought to be covetous by permitting their servants . . . to live at the devotion or almes of other men, passing from countrie to countrie, from one gentleman's house to another, offering their service, which is a kind of beggerie. Who indeede, to speake more trulie, are become beggers for their servants. For commonlie the good-wil men



fession: and many of them were occasionally strollers, that travelled from one gentleman's house to another. Yet so much were they encouraged that, notwithstanding their multitude, some of them acquired large fortunes. Edward Allen, master of the play-house called the Globe, who founded Dulwich College, is a known instance. And an old writer speaks of the very inferior actors, whom he calls the Hirelings, as living in a degree of splendour, which was thought enormous in that frugal age.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time the ancient prices of admission were often very low. Some houses had penny-benches.<sup>5</sup> The "twopenny gallery" is mentioned in the prologue to Beaumont and Fletcher's *Woman-Hater*.<sup>6</sup> And seats of threepence and a groat seem to be intended in

beare to the Lordes, makes them draw the stringes of their purses to extend their liberalitie."—Vide pp. 75, 76, &c.

<sup>4</sup> Stephen Gosson in his *Schoole of Abuse*, 1579, 12mo, fol. 23, says thus of what he terms in his margin *Players-men*: "Over lashing in apparel is so common a fault, that the very hyerlings of some of our players, which stand at revirion of vi s. by the week, jet under gentlemen's noses in sutis of silke, exercising themselves to prating on the stage, and common scoffing when they come abroad, where they look askance over the shoulder at every man of whom the Sunday before they begged an almes. I speake not this, as though everye one that profeseth the qualitie so abused himselfe, for it is well knowen, that some of them are sober, discrete, properly learned, honest householders and citizens, well-thought on among their neighbours at home" [he seems to mean Edward Allen above mentioned], "though the pryde of their shadowes (I mean those hangbyes, whom they succour with stipend) cause them to be somewhat il-talked of abroad."

In a subsequent period we have the following satirical fling at the showy exterior and supposed profits of the actors of that time.—Vide Greene's *Groatworth of Wit*, 1625, 4to.

"'What is your profession?'—'Truly, Sir, . . . I am a *Player*.' 'A Player? . . . I took you rather for a Gentleman of great living; for if by outward habit men should be censured, I tell you, you would be taken for a substantial man.'—'So I am where I dwell . . . What, though the world once went hard with me, when I was fayne to carry my playing-fardle a foot-backe: *Tempora Mutantur* . . . for my very share in playing apparell will not be sold for *two hundred Pounds* . . . Nay more, I can serve to make a pretty speech, for I was a country author, passing at a *Moral*,'" &c.—See Roberto's Tale, Sign. D. 3. b.

<sup>5</sup> So a MS. of Oldys, from Tom Nash, an old pamphlet-writer. And this is confirmed by Taylor the Water-poet, in his *Praise of Beggerie* (p. 99),

"Yet have I seen a begger with his many [sc. vermin],  
Come at a Play-house, all in for one penny."

<sup>6</sup> So in the *Belman's Night-walks* by Decker, 1616, 4to. "Pay thy *twopence* to a Player, in this gallery thou mayest sit by a harlot."



the passage of Prynne above referred to. Yet different houses varied in their prices: that play-house called the HOPE had seats of five several rates, from sixpence to half-a-crown.<sup>7</sup> But the general price of what is now called the Pit, seems to have been a shilling.<sup>8</sup>

The day originally set apart for theatrical exhibition appears to have been Sunday; probably because the first dramatic pieces were of a religious cast. During a great part of Queen Elizabeth's reign the play-houses were only licensed to be opened on that day.<sup>9</sup> But before the end of her reign, or soon after, this abuse was probably removed.

The usual time of acting was early in the afternoon,<sup>1</sup> plays being generally performed by daylight.<sup>2</sup> All female parts were performed by men, no English actress being ever seen on the public stage<sup>3</sup> before the civil wars.

<sup>7</sup> Induct. to Ben. Jonson's *Bartholomew-fair*: an ancient satirical piece, called *The Blacke Booke*, Lond. 1604, 4to, talks of "the sixpenny roomes in Play-houses," and leaves a legacy to one whom he calls "Arch-tobacco-taker of England, in ordinaries, upon stages both common and private."

<sup>8</sup> Shaksp. Prol. to *Hen. VIII.*—Beaum. and Fletch. Prol. to the *Captain*, and to the *Mad-lover*. The pit probably had its name from one of the play-houses having been a cock-pit.

<sup>9</sup> So Ste. Gosson, in his *Schoole of Abuse*, 1579, 12mo, speaking of the Players, says, "These, because they are allowed to play every Sunday, make iiii or v Sundayes at least every week," fol. 24. So the Author of *A Second and Third Blast of Retrait from Plaies*, 1580, 12mo. "Let the magistrate but repel them from the libertie of plaieng on the Sabbth-daie . . . . To plaie on the Sabbth is but a priviledge of sufferance, and might with ease be repelled, were it thoroughly followed."—pp. 61, 62. So again, "Is not the Sabbth of al other daies the most abused? . . . . Wherefore abuse not so the Sabbth-daie, my brethren; leave not the temple of the Lord." . . . . "Those unsaverie morsels of unseemelie sentences passing out of the mouth of a ruffenlie plaier, doth more content the hungrie humors of the rude multitude, and carrieth better relish in their mouthes, than the bread of the worde," &c.—Vide pp. 63, 65, 69, &c. I do not recollect that exclamations of this kind occur in Prynne, whence I conclude that this enormity no longer subsisted in his time.

It should also seem, from the author of the Third Blast above quoted, that the churches still continued to be used occasionally for theatres. Thus in p. 77, he says, that the Players (who, as hath been observed, were servants of the nobility), "under the title of their maisters, or as reteiners, are priviledged to roave abroad, and permitted to publish their mametree in everie temple of God, and that throughout England, unto the horrible contempt of praier."

<sup>1</sup> "He entertaines us (says Overbury in his Character of an Actor) in the best leisure of our life, that is, betweene meales; the most unfit time either for study, or bodily exercise." Even so late as in the reign of Charles II., plays generally began at three in the afternoon.

<sup>2</sup> See *Biogr. Brit.* i. 117. n. D.

<sup>3</sup> I say "no English actress . . . . on the public stage," because Prynne speaks of it as unusual enormity, that "they had Frenchwomen actors



Lastly, with regard to the play-house furniture and ornaments, a writer of King Charles the Second's time,<sup>4</sup> who well remembered the preceding age, assures us, that in general "they had no other scenes nor decorations of the stage, but only old tapestry, and the stage strewed with rushes, with habits accordingly."<sup>5</sup> Yet Coryate thought our theatrical exhibitions, &c., splendid, when compared with what he saw abroad. Speaking of the Theatre for Comedies at Venice, he says, "The house is very beggarly and base in comparison of our stately play-houses in England: neyther can their actors compare with ours for apparrell, shewes, and musicke. Here I observed certaine things that I never saw before; for I saw WOMEN ACT, a thing that I never saw before, though I have heard that it hath been sometimes used in London: and they performed it with as good a grace, action, gesture, and whatsoever convenient for a player, as ever I saw any masculine actor."<sup>6</sup>

It ought, however, to be observed, that amid such a multitude of play-houses as subsisted in the metropolis before the civil wars, there must have been a great difference between their several accommodations, ornaments, and prices: and that some would be much more showy than others, though probably all were much inferior in splendour to the two great theatres after the Restoration.

---

\* \* \* The preceding ESSAY, although some of the materials are new arranged, hath received no alteration deserving notice, from what it was in the second edition, 1767, except in Sect. IV., which in the present impression, hath been much enlarged.

---

in a play not long since personated in Blackfriars Play-house." This was in 1629, vid. p. 215. And though female parts were performed by men or boys on the public stage, yet in Masques at court, the queen and her ladies made no scruple to perform the principal parts, especially in the reigns of James I. and Charles I.

Sir William Davenant, after the Restoration, introduced women, scenery, and higher prices.—See Cibber's *Apology for his own Life*.

<sup>4</sup> See a short discourse on the English Stage subjoined to Flecknor's *Loves Kingdom*, 1674, 12mo.

<sup>5</sup> It appears from an Epigram of Taylor the Water-poet, that one of the principal theatres in his time, viz. the Globe, on the Bankside, Southwark (which Ben Jonson calls the "Glory of the Bank, and Fort of the whole Parish)," had been covered with thatch till it was burnt down in 1613.—See Taylor's *Sculler*, Epig. 22, p. 31; Jonson's *Execration on Vulcan*.

Puttenham tells us they used vizards in his time, "partly to supply the want of players, when there were more parts than there were persons, or that it was not thought meet to trouble . . . princes chambers with too many folkes."—*Art of Eng. Poes.* 1589, p. 26. From the last clause it should seem that they were chiefly used at the *Masques* at court.

<sup>6</sup> Coryate's *Crudities*, 4to, 1611, p. 247.



This is mentioned, because, since it was first published, the History of the English Stage hath been copiously handled by Mr. Thomas Warton in his "History of English Poetry, 1774," &c., 3 vols. 4to (wherein is inserted whatever in these volumes fell in with his subject); and by Edmond Malone, Esq., who in his "Historical Account of the English Stage" (*Shaksp.* vol. i. pt. ii. 1790), hath added greatly to our knowledge of the economy and usages of our ancient theatres.

END OF THE ASSAY.

## I.

Adam Bell, Clym of the Clough, and  
William of Cloudesly

were three noted outlaws, whose skill in archery rendered them formerly as famous in the North of England as Robin Hood and his fellows were in the midland counties. Their place of residence was in the forest of Englewood, not far from Carlisle (called corruptly in the ballad English-wood, whereas Engle- or Ingle-wood, signifies wood for firing). At what time they lived does not appear. The author of the common ballad on *The Pedigree, Education, and Marriage of Robin Hood*, makes them contemporary with Robin Hood's father, in order to give him the honour of beating them : viz.—

“The father of *Robin* a Forester was,  
And he shot in a lusty long-bow  
Two north-country miles and an inch at a shot,  
As the Pindar of Wakefield does know :

“For he brought Adam Bell, and Clim of the Clough,  
And William a Clowdslee  
To shoot with our Forester for forty mark ;  
And our Forester beat them all three.

*Collect. of Old Ballads*, 1727, vol. i. p. 67.

This seems to prove that they were commonly thought to have lived before the popular hero of Sherwood.

Our northern archers were not unknown to their southern countrymen, their excellence at the long-bow is often alluded to by our ancient poets. Shakspeare, in his comedy of *Much Ado about Nothing*, act i., makes Benedicke confirm his resolves of not yielding to love by this protestation, “If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat,<sup>1</sup> and shoot at me ; and he that hits me, let him be clapt on the shoulder and called *Adam* :” meaning *Adam Bell*, as Theobald rightly observes, who refers to one or two other passages in our old poets wherein he is mentioned. The Oxford editor has also well conjectured that “Abraham Cupid,” in *Romeo and Juliet*, act ii. sc. 1, should be “*Adam Cupid*,” in allusion to our archer. Ben Jonson has mentioned *Clym o’ the Clough* in his *Alchemist*, act i. sc. 2. And Sir William Davenant, in a mock poem of his, called *The long Vacation in London*, describes the attorneys and proctors as making matches to meet in Finsbury-fields.

<sup>1</sup> Bottles formerly were of leather ; though perhaps a wooden bottle might be here meant. It is still a diversion in Scotland to hang up a cat in a small cask, or firkin, half filled with soot ; and then a parcel of clowns on horseback try to beat out the ends of it, in order to show their dexterity in escaping before the contents fall upon them.



“ With loynes in canvas bow-case tyde :<sup>2</sup>  
 Where arrowes stick with mickle pride ; . . .  
 Like ghosts of *Adam Bell* and *Clymme*.  
 Sol sets for fear they’l shoot at him.”

*Works*, p. 291, fol. 1673.

I have only to add further, concerning the principal hero of this ballad, that the BELLS were noted rogues in the North so late as the time of Queen Elizabeth. See in Rymer’s *Fœdera*, a letter from Lord William Howard to some of the officers of state, wherein he mentions them.

As for the following stanzas, which will be judged from the style, orthography, and numbers, to be very ancient, they are given (corrected in some places by a MS. in the Editor’s old folio) from a black-letter quarto, *Imprinted at London in Aothburne by Willelm Copland* (no date). That old quarto edition seems to be exactly followed in “*Pieces of Ancient Popular Poetry, &c.*, Lond. 1791,” 8vo, the variations from which that occur in the following copy, are selected from many others in the folio MS. above mentioned; and when distinguished by the usual inverted ‘comma,’ have been assisted by conjecture.

In the same MS. this ballad is followed by another, entitled *Young Cloudeslee*, being a continuation of the present story, and reciting the adventures of William of Cloudesly’s son: but greatly inferior to this both in merit and antiquity.

#### PART THE FIRST.

MERY it was in the grene forèst  
 Amonge the levès grene,  
 Wheras men hunt east and west,  
 Wyth bowes and arrowes kene,

To ryse the dere out of theyr denne,  
 Suche sightes hath ofte bene sene,  
 As by thre yemen of the north countrèy,  
 By them it is I meane.

5

The one of them hight Adam Bel,  
 The other Clym of the Clough,<sup>3</sup>  
 The thyrd was William of Cloudesly,  
 An archer good ynough.

10

<sup>2</sup> *i. e.* Each with a canvas bow-case tied round his loins.

<sup>3</sup> *Clym of the Clough* means Clem. [Clement] of the Cliff: for so Clough signifies in the North.

They were outlawed for venyson,  
 These yemen everychone;  
 They swore them brethren upon a day, 15  
 To Englyshe-wood for to gone.  
 Now lith and lysten, gentylmen,  
 That of myrthes loveth to here:  
 Two of them were single men,  
 The third had a wedded fere. 20  
 Wyllyam was the wedded man,  
 Muche more then was hys care:  
 He sayde to hys brethren upon a day,  
 To Carleile he would fare,  
 For to speke with fayre Alyce his wife, 25  
 And with hys chyldren thre.  
 "By my trouth," sayde Adam Bel,  
 "Not by the counsell of me.  
 "For if ye go to Carleile, brother,  
 And from thys wylde wode wende, 30  
 If the justice may you take,  
 Your lyfe were at an ende."  
 "If that I come not to-morrowe, brother,  
 By pryme to you agayne,  
 Truste you then that I am 'taken,' 35  
 Or else that I am slayne."  
 He toke hys leave of hys brethren two,  
 And to Carleile he is gon;  
 There he knocked at hys owne windowe,  
 Shortlye and anone. 40  
 "Wher be you, fayre Alyce," he sayd,  
 "My wife and chyldren thre?  
 Lyghtly let in thyne owne husbànde,  
 Wyllyam of Cloudeslè."  
 "Alas!" then sayde fayre Alyce, 45  
 And syghed wonderous sore,  
 "Thys place hath ben besette for you,  
 Thys halfe yere and more."



"Now am I here," sayde Cloudeslè,

"I would that in I were :

50

Now fetche us meate and drynke ynoughe,  
And let us make good chere."

She fetched hym meate and drynke plentye,

Lyke a true wedded wyfe,

And pleased hym wyth that she had,

55

Whome she loved as her lyfe.

There lay an old wyfe in that place,

A lytle besyde the fyre,

Whych Wyllyam had found, of charytyè,

More than seven yere.

60

Up she rose and forth she goes,

Evill mote she speede therfore,

For she had sett no fote on ground

In seven yere before.

She went unto the justice-hall,

65

As fast as she could hye :

"Thys night," as ee sayd, "is come to town

Wyllyam of Cloudeslè."

Thereof the justice was full fayne,

And so was the shirife also ;

70

"Thou shalt not trauaile hether, dame, for nought,

Thy meed thou shalt have ore thou go."

They gave to her a ryght good goun

Of scarlate, 'and of graine :

She toke the gyft and home she wente,

75

And couched her doune agayne.

They rysed the towne of mery Carleile

In all the haste they can,

And came thronging to Wyllyames house,

As fast as they might gone.

80

There they besette that good yeman,

Round about on every syde,

Wyllyam hearde great noyse of folkes,

That thither-ward fast hyed.

Alyce opened a back-wyndow,  
 And loked all aboute,  
 She was ware of the justice and shirife bothe,  
 Wyth a full great route.

"Alas ! treason," cryed Alyce,  
 "Ever wo may thou be !  
 Goe into my chamber, husband," she sayd,  
 "Swete Wylliam of Cloudeslè."

90

He toke hys sweard and hys bucler,  
 Hys bow and hys chyldren thre,  
 And wente into hys strongest chamber,  
 Where he thought the surest to be.

95

Fayre Alyce, like a lover true,  
 Took a pollaxe in her hande :  
 Said, "He shal dye that cometh in  
 Thys dore, whyle I may stand."

100

Cloudeslè bente a right good bowe,  
 That was of a trusty tre,  
 He smot the justise on the brest,  
 That hys arowe brest in thre.

" 'A' curse on his harte," saide William,  
 "Thys day thy cote dyd on ;  
 If it had ben no better then myne,  
 It had gone nere thy bone."

105

"Yelde the, Cloudeslè," sayd the justise,  
 "And thy bowe and thy arrowes the fro."  
 " 'A' curse on hys hart," sayd fair Alyce,  
 "That my husband councelleth so."

110

"Set fyre on the house," saide the sherife,  
 "Syth it wyll no better be,  
 And brenne we therin William," he saide,  
 "Hys wyfe and chyldren thre."

115

They fyred the house in many a place.  
 The fyre flew up on hye ;  
 "Alas !" then cryed fayre Alice,  
 "I se we here shall dy."

120



William openyd a backe wyndow,  
 That was in hys chamber hye,  
 And there with sheetes he did let downe  
 His wyfe and chyldren thre.

“Have here my treasure,” sayde William, 125  
 “My wyfe and my chyldren thre,  
 For Christès love do them no harme,  
 But wreke you all on me.”

Wyllyam shot so wondrous well,  
 Tyll hys arrowes were all agoe, 130  
 And the fyre so fast upon hym fell,  
 That hys bowstryng brent in two.

The sparkles brent and fell upon  
 Good Wyllyam of Cloudeslè;  
 Than was he a wofull man, and sayde, 135  
 “This is a cowardes death to me.

“Lever had I,” sayde Wyllyam,  
 “With my sworde in the route to renne,  
 Then here among myne enemyes wode,  
 Thus cruelly to bren.” 140

He toke hys sweard and hys buckler,  
 And among them all he ran;  
 Where the people were most in prece,  
 He smot downe many a man.

There myght no man abyde hys stroke, 145  
 So fersly on them he ran;  
 Then they threw wyndowes and dores on him,  
 And so toke that good yemàn.

There they hym bounde both hand and fote,  
 And in depe dungeon hym cast; 150  
 “Now Cloudeslè,” sayd the justice,  
 “Thou shalt be hanged in hast.”

“A payre of new gallowes,” sayd the sherife,  
 “Now shal I for the make;”  
 And the gates of Carleil shal be shutte: 155  
 No man shal come in therat.

V. 151, sic MS., hye justice. P.C. V. 153, 4, are contracted from the  
 fol. MS. and P.C.

“Then shall not helpe Clym of the Cloughe,  
 Nor yet shall Adam Bell,  
 Though they came with a thousand mo,  
 Nor all the devels in hell.” 160

Early in the mornynge the justice uprose,  
 To the gates first gan he gon,  
 And commaunded to be shut full close  
 Lightilè everychone.

Then went he to the markett place, 165  
 As fast as he coulde hye;  
 A payre of new gallowes there he set up  
 Besyde the pyllorye.

A lytle boy ‘amonge them asked,’  
 “What meaneth that gallow-tre?” 170  
 They sayde “to hange a good yemàn,  
 Called Wylliam of Cloudeslè.”

That lytle boye was the towne swyne-heard,  
 And kept fayre Alyces swyne;  
 Oft he had seene William in the wodde, 175  
 And geuen hym there to dyne.

He went out att a crevis in the wall,  
 And lightly to the woode dyd gone;  
 There met he with these wightye yemen  
 Shortly and anone. 180

“Alas!” then sayde that lytle boye,  
 “Ye tary here all to longe;  
 Cloudeslè is taken and dampned to death,  
 All readye for to honge.”

“Alas!” then sayd good Adam Bell, 185  
 “That ever we see thys daye!  
 He had better with us have taryed,  
 So ofte as we dyd hym praye.

“He myght have dwelt in grene forèste,  
 Under the shadowes grene, 190  
 And have kepte both hym and us in reste,  
 Out of trouble and teene.”



Adam bent a ryght good bow,  
 A great hart sone hee had slayne ;  
 " Take that, chylde," he sayed, " to thy dynner,  
 And bryng me myne arrowe agayne." 195

" Now go we hence," sayd these wightye yeomen,  
 " Tary we no lenger here ;  
 We shall hym borowe, by God his grace,  
 Though we bye it full dere." 200

To Caerleil wente these good yemen,  
 All in a mornyng of Maye.  
 Here is a FYT<sup>4</sup> of Cloudeslye,  
 And another is for to saye.

## PART THE SECOND.

AND when they came to mery Carleile,  
 All in 'the' mornyng tyde,  
 They founde the gates shut them untill  
 About on every syde.

" Alas ! " then sayd good Adam Bell, 5  
 " That ever we were made men !  
 These gates be shut so wonderous fast,  
 We may not come therein."

Then bespake him Clym of the Clough,  
 " Wyth a wyle we wyl us in bryng ; 10  
 Let us saye we be messengers,  
 Streight come nowe from our king."

Adam said, " I have a letter written,  
 Now let us wysely werke,  
 We wyl saye we have the kynges seale ; 15  
 I holde the porter no clerke."

Then Adam Bell bete on the gate,  
 With strokes great and stronge ;  
 The porter marveiled who was therat,  
 And to the gate he throng. 20

V. 197, jolly yeomen. MS. wight yong men, P.C.

\* See Gloss.

- "Who is there nowc," sayde the porter,  
 "That maketh all thys knockinge?"  
 "We be tow messengers," quoth Clim of the Clough,  
 "Be come ryght from our kyng."  
 "We have a letter," sayd Adam Bel, 25  
 "To the justice we must it bryng;  
 Let us in, our message to do,  
 That we were agayne to the kyng."  
 "Here commeth none in," sayd the porter, 30  
 "By Hym that dyed on a tre,  
 Tyll a false thefe be hanged up,  
 Called Wyllyam of Cloudeslè."  
 Then spake the good yeman Clym of the Clough,  
 And swore by Mary fre, 35  
 "And if that we stande long wythout,  
 Lyke a thefe hanged thou shalt be.  
 "Lo! here we have the kyngès seale;  
 What, lurden, art thou wode?"  
 The porter went<sup>s</sup> it had ben so, 40  
 And lyghtly dyd off hys hode.  
 "Welcome be my lordes seale," he saide;  
 "For that ye shall come in."  
 He opened the gate full shortlye,  
 An euyl openyng for him.  
 "Now are we in," sayde Adam Bell, 45  
 "Whereof we are full faine,  
 But Christ he knowes, that barowed hell,  
 How we shall com out agayne."  
 "Had we the keys," said Clim of the Clough, 50  
 "Ryght wel then shoulde we spede;  
 Then might we come out wel ynough  
 When we se tyme and nede."

V. 38, Lordeyne. P.C.

<sup>s</sup> *i. e.* weened, *thought* (which last is the reading of the folio MS.). Calais or Rouen was taken from the English by showing the governor who could not read, a letter with the king's seal, which was all he looked at.



They called the porter to counsell,  
 And wrange hys necke in two,  
 And caste hym in a depe dongeòn,  
 And toke hys keys hym fro.

55

"Now am I porter," sayd Adam Bel,  
 "Se, brother, the keys are here;  
 The worst porter to merry Carleile,  
 That ye had thys hundred yere.

60

"And now wyll we our bowes bend,  
 Into the towne wyll we go,  
 For to delyuer our dere brothèr,  
 That lyeth in care and wo."

Then they bent theyr good ewe bowes,  
 And loked theyr stringes were round;<sup>6</sup>  
 The markett place in mery Carleile  
 They beset in that stound.

65

And as they loked them besyde,  
 A paire of new galowes 'they' see,  
 And the justice with a quest of squyers,  
 Had judged William hanged to be.

70

And Cloudeslè lay redy there in a carte,  
 Fast bound both fote and hande,  
 And a stronge rop about hys necke,  
 All readye for to hange.

75

The justice called to him a ladde,  
 Cloudeslès clothes hee shold have,  
 To take the measure of that yemàn,  
 Therafter to make hys grave.

80

"I have sene as great mervaille," said Cloudesle,  
 "As betweyne thys and pryme,  
 He that maketh a grave for me,  
 Hymselfe may lye therin."

<sup>6</sup> So Ascham in his *Toxophilus*, gives a precept; "The stringe must be rounde" (p. 149, ed. 1761): otherwise, we may conclude from mechanica principles, the arrow will not fly true.

“Thou speakest proudlye,” said the justice, 85  
 “I shall the hange with my hande.”

Full wel herd this his brethren two,  
 There styll as they dyd stande.

Then Cloudeslè cast hys eyen asyde, 90  
 And saw hys ‘brethren twaine’  
 At a corner of the market place,  
 Redy the justice for to slaine.

“I se comfort,” sayd Cloudeslè,  
 “Yet hope I well to fare ;  
 If I might have my handes at wyll, 95  
 Ryght lytle wolde I care.”

Then spake good Adam Bell  
 To Clym of the Clough so free,  
 “Brother, se ye marke the justyce wel,  
 Lo yonder you may him se. 100

“And at the shyrife shote I wyll,  
 Strongly wyth an arrowe kene ;  
 A better shote in mery Carleile  
 Thys seven yere was not sene.”

They loosed their arrowes both at once, 105  
 Of no man had they dread ;  
 The one hyt the justice, the other the sheryfe,  
 That both theyr sides gan blede.

All men voyded, that them stode nye,  
 When the justice fell to the grounde, 110  
 And the sherife nye hym by,  
 Eyther had his deathes wounde.

All the citizens fast gan flye,  
 They durst no longer abyde ;  
 There lyghtly they loosed Cloudeslee, 115  
 Where he with ropes lay tyde.

Wyllyam start to an officer of the towne,  
 Hys axe out of hys hande he wronge,  
 On eche syde he smote them downe,  
 Hee thought he taryed to long. 120



Wyllyam sayde to hys brethren two,  
    "Thys daye let us lyve and de ;  
If ever you have nede as I have now,  
    The same shall you finde by me."

They shot so well in that tyde, 125  
    For theyr stringes were of silke ful sure,  
That they kept the stretes on every side :  
    That batàyle did long endure.

The fought together as brethren tru, 130  
    Lyke hardy men and bolde ;  
Many a man to the ground they thrue,  
    And many a herte made colde.

But when their arrowes were all gon,  
    Men preceed to them full fast ;  
They drew theyr swordès then anone, 135  
    And theyr bowes from them they cast.

They went lyghtlye on theyr way,  
    Wyth swordes and buclers round ;  
By that it was myd of the day,  
    They made many a wound. 140

There was many an out-horne<sup>7</sup> in Carleil blowen,  
    And the belles bacwàrd dyd ryng ;  
Many a woman sayde alas !  
    And many theyr handes dyd wryng.

The mayre of Carleile forth was com, 145  
    Wyth hym a ful great route ;  
These yemen dred hym full sore,  
    Of theyr lyves they stode in great doute.

The mayre came armed a full great pace, 150  
    With a pollaxe in hys hande ;  
Many a strong man wyth him was,  
    There in that stowre to stande.

V. 148, For of. MS.

<sup>7</sup> *Outhorne* is an old term, signifying the calling forth of subjects to arms by the sound of a horn.—See Cole's Lat. Dict., Bailey, &c.

The mayre smot at Cloudeslè with his bil,  
Hys bucler he brast in two ;

Full many a yeman with great evyll,

155

“ Alas ! treason ” they cryed for wo.

“ Kepe we the gates fast,” they bad,

“ That these traytours thereout not go.”

But al for nought was that they wrought,

For so fast they downe were layde,

160

Tyll they all thre, that so manfulli fought,

Were gotten without at a braide.

“ Have here your keys,” sayd Adam Bel,

“ Myne office I here forsake ;

If you do by my counsell,

165

A new porter do ye make.”

He threw theyr keys at theyr heads,

And bad them evell to thryve ;

And all that letteth any good yeman

To come and comfort his wyfe.

170

Thus be these good yemen gon to the wod,

And lyghtly as lefe on lynde ;

The lough and be mery in theyr mode,

Theyr enemyes were ferr behynd.

And when they came to Englyshe-wode,

Under the trusty tre,

175

There they found bowes full good,

And arrowes full great plentye.

“ So God me help,” sayd Adam Bell

And Clym of the Clough so fre,

180

“ I would we were in mery Carleile,

Before that fayre meynye.”

They set them downe and made good chere,

And eate and dranke full well :

A second FYR of the wightye yeomen .

185

Another I wyll you tell.



## PART THE THIRD

As they sat in Englyshe-wood,  
 Under the green-wode tre,  
 They thought they herd a woman wepe,  
 But her they mought not se.

Sore then syghed the fayre Alyce : 5  
 “ That ever I sawe thys day !  
 For nowe is my dere husband slayne,  
 Alas ! and wel-a-way !

“ Myght I have spoken wyth hys dere brethren,  
 Or with eyther of them twayne, 10  
 To shew to them what him befell,  
 My hart were out of payne.”

Cloudeslè walked a lytle beside,  
 He looked under the grene wood linde,  
 He was ware of his wyfe, and chyldren thre, 15  
 Full wo in harte and mynde.

“ Welcome, wyfe,” then sayde Wyllyam,  
 “ Under ‘ this ’ trusti tre ;  
 I had wende yesterdaye, by swete Saynt John,  
 Thou sholdest me never ‘ have ’ se.” 20

“ Now well is me that ye be here,  
 My harte is out of wo.”  
 “ Dame,” he sayde, “ be mery and glad,  
 And thanke my brethren two.”

“ Herof to speake,” said Adam Bell, 25  
 “ I-wis it is no bote ;  
 The meate, that we must supp withall,  
 It runneth yet fast on fote.

Then went they downe into a launde, 30  
 These noble archares all thre,  
 Eche of them slew a hart of greece,  
 The best that they cold se.

"Have here the best, Alyce, my wyfe,"

Sayde Wylllyam of Cloudeslye;

"By cause ye so bouldly stode by me,

When I was slayne full nye."

35

Then went they to suppere,

Wyth suche meate as they had,

And thanked God of ther fortune;

They were both mery and glad.

40

And when they had supped well,

Certayne wythouten lease,

Cloudeslè sayd, "We wyll to our kyng,

To get us a charter of peace.

"Alyce shal be at sojournyng

In a nunnery here besyde;

My tow sonnes shal wyth her go,

And ther they shall abyde.

45

"Myne eldest son shall go wyth me,

For hym have 'you' no care,

And he shall breng you worde agayn,

How that we do fare."

50

Thus be these yemen to London gone,

As fast as they myght 'he,'<sup>9</sup>

Tyll they came to the kynges pallace,

Where they woulde nedes bo.

55

And whan they came to the kyngès courte,

Unto the pallace gate,

Of no man wold they aske no leave,

But boldly went in therat.

60

They preceed prestly into the hall,

Of no man had they dreade;

The porter came after and dyd them call,

And with them gan to chyde.

V. 50, have I no care. P.C.

<sup>9</sup> i. e. hie, hasten.



The usher sayde, "Yemen, what wold ye have?" 65

I pray you tell to me;  
You myght thus make offycers shent:  
Good Syrs, of whence be ye?"

"Syr, we be out-lawes of the forest,  
Certayne withouten lease, 70  
And hether we be come to our kyng,  
To get us a charter of peace."

And whan they came before the kyng,  
As it was the lawe of the lande,  
The kneled downe without lettyng, 75  
And eche held up his hand.

The sayed, "Lorde, we beseche the here,  
That ye wyll graunt us grace,  
For we have slayne your fat falow dere  
In many a sondry place." 80

"What be your nams?" then said our king,  
"Anone that you tell me:"  
They sayd, "Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough,  
And Wyllyam of Cloudeslè."

"Be ye those theves," then sayd our kyng, 85  
"That men have tolde of to me?"  
Here to God I make an avowe,  
Ye shal be hanged al thre.

"Ye shal be dead without mercy,  
As I am kynge of this lande." 90  
He commanded his officers everichone  
Fast on them to lay hande.

There they toke these good yemen,  
And arested them al thre:  
"So may I thryve," sayd Adam Bell, 95  
"Thys game lyketh not me."

"But, good Lorde, we beseche you now,  
That yee graunt us grace.  
Insomuche as we do to you come,  
Or els that we may fro you passe, 100

“ With such weapons as we have here,  
 Tyll we be out of your place ;  
 And yf we lyve this hundreth yere,  
 We wyll aske you no grace.”

“ Ye speake proudly,” sayd the kynge, 105  
 “ Ye shall be hanged all thre.”

“ That were great pitye,” then sayd the quene,  
 “ If any grace myght be.

“ My Lorde, whan I came fyrst into this lande, .  
 To be your wedded wyfe, 110  
 The fyrst boone that I wold aske,  
 Ye would graunt it me belyfe ;

“ And I never asked none tyll now,  
 Therefore, good Lorde, graunt it me.”  
 “ Now aske it, madam,” sayd the kynge, 115  
 “ And graunted it shal be.”

“ Then, good my Lord, I you beseche,  
 These yemen graunt ye me.”  
 “ Madame, ye might have asked a boone 120  
 That shuld have been worth them all thre.

“ Ye myght have asked towres and townes,  
 Parkes and forestes plenté.”  
 “ None soe pleasant to my pay,” shee sayd ;  
 “ Nor none so lefe to me.”

“ Madame, sith it is your desyre, 125  
 Your askyng graunted shal be ;  
 But I had lever have given you  
 Good market townes thre.”

Th quene was a glad woman,  
 And sayde, “ Lord, gramarcy ; 130  
 I dare undertake for them,  
 That true men shal they be.



"But, good my Lord, speke som mery word,  
That comfort they may se."

"I graunt you grace," then sayd our king,  
"Washe, felos, and to meate go ye."

135

They had not setten but a whyle,  
Certayne without lesynge,  
There came messengers out of the north,  
With letters to our kynge.

140

And whan the came before the kyng,  
They knelt downe on theyr kne,  
And sayd, "Lord, your officers grete you well,  
Of Carleile in the north cuntrè."

"How fareth my justice," sayd the kyng,  
"And my sherife also?"

145

"Syr, they be slayne, without leasyng,  
And many an officer mo."

"Who hath them slayne?" sayd the kyng;  
"Anone thou tell to me:"

150

"Adam Bell, and Clime of the Clough,  
And Wyllyam of Cloudeslè."

"Alas for rewth!" then sayd our kynge,  
"My hart is wonderous sore;

I had lever than a thousande ponde,  
I had knowne of thys before.

155

"For I have graunted them grace,  
And that forthynketh me,

I ut had I knowne all thys before,  
They had been hanged all thre."

160

The kyng hee opened the letter anone,  
Hymselfe he red it thro,  
And founde how these outlawes had slain  
Thre hundred men and mo.

Fyrst the justice and the sheryfe,  
And the mayre of Carleile towne;  
Of all the constables and catchipolles  
Alyve were 'scant' left one.

165

The baylyes and the bedyls both,  
 And the sergeauntes of the law, 170  
 And forty fosters of the fe,  
 These outlawes had yslaw,

And broke his parks, and slayne his dere;  
 Of all they chose the best;  
 So perelous out-lawes as they were, 175  
 Walked not by easte nor west.

When the kynge this letter had red,  
 In hys harte he syghed sore;  
 "Take up the tables, anone," he bad,  
 "For I may eat no more." 180

The kyng called hys best archars,  
 To the buttes wyth hym to go;  
 "I wyll se these felowes shote," he sayd,  
 "In the north have wrought this wo."

The kynges bowmen buske them blyve, 185  
 And the quenes archers also,  
 So dyd these thre wyghtye yemen,  
 With them they thought to go.

There twyse or thryse they shote about,  
 For to assay theyr hande; 190  
 There was no shote these yemen shot,  
 That any prycke<sup>1</sup> myght stand.

Then spake Wylliam of Cloudeslè,  
 "By Him that for me dyed,  
 I hold hym never no good archar, 195  
 That shoteth at buttes so wyde."

"At what a butte now wold ye shote,  
 I pray thee tell to me?"  
 "At suche a but, Syr," he sayd,  
 As men use in my countrè." 200



Wyllyam wente into a fyeld,  
 And 'with him' his two brethren:  
 There they set up two hasell rodde,  
 Full twenty score betwene.

"I hold him an archer," said Cloudezlè, 205  
 "That yonder wande cleveth in two;"  
 "Here is none suche," sayd the kyng,  
 "Nor none that can so do."

"I shall assaye, Syr," sayd Cloudezlè,  
 "Or that I farther go." 210  
 Cloudeley, with a bearyng arowe,  
 Clave the wand in two.

"Thou art the best archer," then said the king,  
 "For sothe that ever I se."  
 "And yet for your love," sayd Wyllyam, 215  
 "I wyll do more maystery."

"I have a sonne is seven yere olde,  
 He is to me full deare;  
 I wyll hym tye to a stake,  
 All shall se that be here; 220

"And lay an apple upon hys head,  
 And go syxe score hym fro,  
 And I my selfe, with a brode aròw,  
 Shall cleve the apple in two."

"Now haste the," then sayd the kyng, 225  
 "By Hym that dyed on a tre;  
 But yf thou do not as thou hest sayde,  
 Hanged shalt thou be.

"And thou touche his head or gowne,  
 In syght that men may se, 230  
 By all the sayntes that be in heaven,  
 I shall hange you all thre."

V. 202, 203, 212, to. P.C.

V. 204, twenty score paces. P.C.

i. e. 400 yards.

V. 208, sic MS., none that can. P.C.

V. 222,

six-score paces. P.C., i. e. 120 yards.

"That I have promised," said William,  
 "That I wyll never forsake:"

And there even before the kynge, 235  
 In the earth he drove a stake,

And bound therto his eldest sonne,  
 And bad hym stand styll thereat,  
 And turned the childes face him fro,  
 Because he should not start. 240

An apple upon his head he set,  
 And then his bowe he bent;  
 Syxe score paces they were meaten,  
 And thether Cloudeslè went.

There he drew out a fayr brode arrowe, 245  
 Hys bowe was great and longe,  
 He set that arrowe in his bowe,  
 That was both styffe and stronge.

He prayed the people, that wer there,  
 That they would still stand, 250  
 "For he that shoteth for such a wager,  
 Behoveth a stedfast hand."

Muche people prayed for Cloudeslè,  
 That hys lyfe saved myght be,  
 And whan he made hym redy to shote, 255  
 There was many weeping ee.

'But' Cloudeslè cleft the apple in two,  
 As many a man myght se.  
 "Over Gods forbode," sayde the kinge,  
 "That thou shold shote at me. 260

"I geve thee eightene pence a day,  
 And my bowe shalt thou bere,  
 And over all the north countrè,  
 I make thee chyfe rydère."

V. 243, sic MS., out met. P.C.

V. 252, steedye. MS. V. 265, and I geve the xvii pence. P.C.



"And I thyrtene pence a day," said the quene, 265

"By God and by my fay;  
Come feche thy payment when thou wylt,  
No man shall say the nay."

"Wyllyam, I make the a gentleman,  
Of clothyng and of fe, 270  
And thy two brethren, yemen of my chambre,  
For they are so semely to se.

"Your sonne, for he is tendre of age,  
Of my wyne-seller he shall be,  
And when he commeth to mans estate, 275  
Better avaunced shall he be."

"And, Wyllyam, bring to me your wife," said the  
"Me longeth her sore to se; [quene.  
She shall be my chefe gentlewoman,  
To governe my nurserye." 280

The yemen thanked them full curteously,  
"To some byshop wyl we wend,  
Of all the synnes that we have done  
To be assoyld at his hand."

So forth be gone these good yemen, 285  
As fast as they might 'he';<sup>2</sup>  
And after came and dwelled with the kynge,  
And dyed good men all thre.

Thus endeth the lives of these good yemen,  
God send them eternall blysse, 290  
And all that with a hand-bowe shoteth,  
That of heven they may never mysse. Amen.

V. 282, And sayd to some Bishopp wee will wend. MS.

<sup>2</sup> he, i. e. hie, hasten. See the Glossary.

## II.

## The Aged Lover renounceth Love.

The Grave-digger's song in *Hamlet*, act v., is taken from three stanzas of the following poem, though greatly altered and disguised, as the same were corrupted by the ballad-singers of Shakspeare's time; or perhaps so designed by the poet himself, the better to paint the character of an illiterate clown. The original is preserved among Surrey's Poems, and is attributed to Lord Vaux, by George Gascoigne, who tells us, it "was thought by some to be made upon his death-bed;" a popular error which he laughs at. (See his *Epist. to Yong Gent.* prefixed to his *Posies*, 1575, 4to.) It is also ascribed to Lord Vaux in a manuscript copy preserved in the British Museum.<sup>1</sup> This lord was remarkable for his skill in drawing feigned manners, &c., for so I understand an ancient writer. "The Lord Vaux his commendation lyeth chiefly in the facilitie of his meetre, and the aptnesse of his descriptions such as he taketh upon him to make, namely in sundry of his Songs, wherein he sheweth the *counterfait action* very lively and pleasantly."—*Arte of Eng. Poesie*, 1589, p. 51. See another song by this poet in vol. ii. no. viii.

I LOTHE that I did love,	
In youth that I thought swete,	
As time requires : for my behove	
Me thinkes they are not mete.	
My lustes they do me leave,	5
My fiansies all are fled ;	
And tract of time begins to weave	
Gray heares upon my hed.	
For Age with steling steps	
Hath clawde me with his crouch,	10
And lusty ' Youthe ' away he leapes,	
As there had bene none such.	
My muse doth not delight	
Me, as she did before ;	
My hand and pen are not in plight,	15
As they have bene of yore.	

Ver. 6, be. P.C. [printed copy in 1557.] V. 10, *crouch* perhaps should be *clouch*, cluch, grasp. V. 11, life away she. P.C.

<sup>1</sup> Harl. MSS. num. 1703, § 25. The readings gathered from that copy are distinguished here by inverted commas. The text is printed from the "Songs, &c., of the Earl of Surrey and others, 1557, 4to."



For Reason me denies  
   ' All ' youthly idle rime ;  
 And day by day to me she cries,  
   " Leave off these toyes in tyme." 20  
 The wrinkles in my brow,  
   The furrowes in my face  
 Say, " Limping Age will ' lodge ' him now  
   Where Youth must geve him place."  
 The harbenger of death, 25  
   To me I se him ride :  
 The cough, the cold, the gasping breath  
   Doth bid me to provide  
 A pikeax and a spade,  
   And eke a shrowding shete, 30  
 A house of clay for to be made  
   For such a guest most mete.  
 Me thinkes I hear the clarke  
   That knoles the careful knell,  
 And bids me leave my ' wearye ' warke, 35  
   Ere Nature me compell.  
 My kepers<sup>2</sup> knit the knot,  
   That Youth doth laugh to scorne,  
 Of me that ' shall bee cleane ' forgot,  
   As I had ' ne'er ' been borne. 40  
 Thus must I Youth geve up,  
   Whose badge I long did weare ;  
 To them I yelde the wanton cup,  
   That better may it beare.  
 Lo here the bared skull, 45  
   By whose bald signe I know,  
 That stouping Age away shall pull  
   ' What ' youthful yeres did sow.

V. 18, this. P.C.

caught him. MS.

bell. MS.

clene shal be. P.C.

some P.CC.

V. 23, sic ed. 1583; 'tis *hedge* in ed. 1557. hath

V. 30, wyndyng-sheete. MS.

V. 35, wofull. P.C.

V. 40, not. P.C.

V. 48, Which. P.C., That. MS.

V. 38, did. P.C.

V. 45, bare-hedde. MS. and

What is *conject.*<sup>2</sup> Alluding perhaps to Eccles. **III.** 3.

For Beautie with her band  
 These croked cares had wrought, 50  
 And shipped me into the lande,  
 From whence I first was brought.

And ye that bide behinde,  
 Have ye none other trust ;  
 As ye of claye were cast by kinde, 55  
 So shall ye 'turne' to dust.

V. 56, wast. P.C.



### III.

#### Jephthah Judge of Israel.

In Shakspeare's *Hamlet*, act ii. sc. 7, the hero of the Play takes occasion to banter Polonius with some scraps of an old ballad, which has never appeared yet in any collection ; for which reason, as it is but short, it will not perhaps be unacceptable to the reader : who will also be diverted with the pleasant absurdities of the composition. It was retrieved from utter oblivion by a lady, who wrote it down from memory as she had formerly heard it sung by her father. I am indebted for it to the friendship of Mr Steevens.

It has been said that the original ballad, in black-letter, is among Anthony à Wood's collection, in the Ashmolean Museum. But, upon application lately made, the volume which contained the song was missing, so that it can only now be given as in the former edition.

The banter of Hamlet is as follows :

*Hamlet.* 'O Jephtha, Judge of Israel,' what a treasure hadst thou !

*Polonius.* What a treasure had he, my lord ?

*Ham.* Why, 'One faire daughter, and no more, The which he loved passing well.'

*Pol.* Still on my daughter.

*Ham.* Am not I i' th' right, old Jephtha ?

*Pol.* If you call me Jephtha, my lord ; I have a daughter, that I love passing well.

*Ham.* Nay, that follows not.

*Pol.* What follows then, my lord ?

*Ham.* Why, 'As by lot, God wot ;' and then, you know, 'It came to passe, As most like it was.' The first row of the pious chanson will shew you more."—Edit. 1793, vol. xv. p. 133.



HAVE you not heard these many years ago,  
     Jeptha was judge of Israel?  
 He had one only daughter and no mo,  
     The which he loved passing well.  
         And as by lott,  
         God wot,  
         It so came to pass,  
         As Gods will was,  
         That great wars there should be,  
         And none should be chosen chief but he.      10  
 And when he was appointed judge,  
     And chieftain of the company,  
 A solemn vow to God he made,  
     If he returned with victory,  
         At his return,  
         To burn  
         The first live thing,  
         \*           \*           \*           \*           \*  
         That should meet with him then,  
         Off his house when he should return agen.      20  
 It came to pass, the wars was o'er,  
     And he returnd with victory;  
 His dear and only daughter first of all  
     Came to meet her father foremostly:  
         And all the way  
         She did play  
         On tabret and pipe,  
         Full many a stripe,  
         With note so high,  
         For joy that her father is come so nigh.      30  
 But when he saw his daughter dear  
     Coming on most foremostly,  
 He wrung his hands, and tore his hair,  
     And cryed out most piteously:  
         " Oh! it s thou," said he,  
         " That have brought me  
         Low,  
         And troubled me so,  
         That I know not what to do.

“ For I have made a vow,” he sed,  
 “ The which must be replenished ;” 40

\* \* \* \* \*

“ What thou hast spoke  
 Do not revoke,  
 What thou hast said ;  
 Be not afraid ; 45  
 Altho’ it be I,  
 Keep promises to God on high.

“ But, dear father, grant me one request,  
 That I may go to the wilderness,  
 Three months there with my friends to stay ; 50  
 There to bewail my virginity ;  
 And let there be,”

Said she,  
 “ Some two or three  
 Young maids with me.” 55  
 So he sent her away,  
 For to mourn, for to mourn, till her dying day.



#### IV.

#### A Robyn, Jolly Robyn.

In his *Twelfth Night*, Shakspeare introduces the Clown singing part of the two first stanzas of the following song, which has been recovered from an ancient MS. of Dr. Harrington’s, at Bath, preserved among the many literary treasures transmitted to the ingenious and worthy possessor by a long line of most respectable ancestors. Of these, only a small part hath been printed in the *Nugæ Antiquæ*, 3 vols. 12mo ; a work which the public impatiently wishes to see continued.

The song is thus given by Shakspeare, act iv. sc. 2 (Malone’s edit. iv. 93).

“ *Clown*. Hey Robin, jolly Robin [*singing*],  
 Tell me how thy lady does.

*Malvolio*. Fool—

*Clown*. My lady is unkind, perdy.

*Mal*. Fool—

*Clown*. Alas ! why is she so ?

*Mal*. Fool, I say—

*Clown*. She loves another. Who calls, ha ? ”



Dr. Farmer has conjectured that the song should begin thus :

“ Hey, jolly Robin, tell to me  
How does thy lady do?  
My lady is unkind, perdy,  
Alas! why is she so?”

But this emendation is now superseded by the proper readings of the old song itself, which is here printed from what appears the most ancient of Dr. Harrington's poetical MSS., and which has, therefore, been marked No. I. (*scil.* p. 68). That volume seems to have been written in the reign of King Henry VIII., and as it contains many of the poems of Sir Thomas Wyatt, hath had almost all the contents attributed to him by marginal directions, written with an old but later hand, and not always rightly, as, I think, might be made appear by other good authorities. Among the rest, this song is there attributed to Sir Thomas Wyatt also; but the discerning reader will probably judge it to belong to a more obsolete writer.

In the old MS. to the third and fifth stanzas is prefixed this title, *Responce*; and to the fourth and sixth, *Le Plaintiff*: but in the last instance so evidently wrong, that it was thought better to omit these titles, and to mark the changes of the dialogue by inverted commas. In other respects the MS. is strictly followed, except where noted in the margin. Yet the first stanza appears to be defective, and it should seem that a line is wanting, unless the four first words were lengthened in the tune.

A Robyn,  
Jolly Robyn,  
Tell me how thy leman doeth,  
And thou shalt knowe of myn.

“ My lady is unkynde, perde.”

5

Alack! why is she so?

“ She loveth an other better than me;  
And yet she will say no.”

I fynde no such doublenes;

I fynde women true;

10

My lady loveth me dowlles,

And will change for no newe.

“ Thou art happy while that doeth last:

But I say, as I fynde,

That women's love is but a blast,

15

And torneth with the wynde.”

Ver. 4, shall. MS.

Suche folkes can take no harme by love,  
That can abide their torn.

"But I alas can no way prove  
In love, but lake and morne."

20

But if thou wilt avoyde thy harme,  
Lerne this lessen of me:  
At others fieres thy selfe to warme,  
And let them warme with the.



## V.

## A Song to the Lute in Musicke.

This sonnet (which is ascribed to Richard Edwards<sup>1</sup> in the "*Paradise of Daintie Devises*," fo. 31, b.) is by Shakspeare made the subject of some pleasant ridicule in his *Romeo and Juliet*, act iv. sc. 5, where he introduces Peter putting this question to the Musicians:

"*Peter* . . . . Why 'Silver Sound?' why 'Musické with her silver sound?' what say you, Simon Catling?

*1st. Musician.* Marry, sir, because silver hath a sweet sound.

*Pet.* Pretty! what say you, Hugh Rebecke?

*2nd. Mus.* I say, silver sound, because Musicians sound for silver.

*Pet.* Pretty too! what say you, James Sound-post.

*3rd. Mus.* Faith, I know not what to say.

*Pet.* . . . I will say for you: It is 'Musicke with her silver sound,' because Musicians have no gold for sounding."—Edit. 1793, vol. xiv. p. 529.

This ridicule is not so much levelled at the song itself (which for the time it was written is not inelegant), as at those forced and unnatural explanations often given us by painful editors and expositors of ancient authors.

This copy is printed from an old quarto MS. in the Cotton Library [Vesp. A 25], entitled "Divers things of Hen. viij's time:" with some corrections from *The Paralise of Dainty Devises*, 1596.

WHERE gripinge grefes the hart would wounde,  
And dolefulle dumps the mynde oppresse,  
There musicke with her silver-sound  
With spede is wont to send redresse:  
Of trobled mynds, in every sore,  
Swete musicke hath a salve in store.

5

<sup>1</sup> See Wood's *Athen.*, Tanner's *Biblioth.*, and Hawkins' *Hist. of Music*.



In joye yt maks our mirth abounde,  
 In woe yt cheres our hevy sprites;  
 Be-strawghted heads relyef hath founde,  
 By musickes pleasaunt swete delightes:  
 Our senses all, what shall I say more?  
 Are subjecte unto musicks lore.

10

The Gods by musicke have their prayse;  
 The lyfe, the soul therein doth joye;  
 For, as the Romaine poet sayes,  
 In seas, whom pyratts would destroy,  
 A dolphin saved from death most sharpe  
 Arion playing on his harpe.

15

O heavenly gyft, that rules the mynd,  
 Even as the sterne dothe rule the shippe!  
 O musicke, whom the Gods assinde  
 To comforte manne, whom cares would nippe!  
 Since thow both man and beste doest move,  
 What beste ys he, wyll the disprove?

20

## VI.

## King Cophetua and the Beggar-Maid

is a story often alluded to by our old dramatic writers. Shakspeare in his *Romeo and Juliet*, act ii. sc. 1, makes Mercutio say,

——“Her [Venus’s] purblind son and heir,  
 Young Adam<sup>1</sup> Cupid, he that shot so true,  
 When King Cophetua loved the beggar-maid.”

As the 13th line of the following ballad seems here particularly alluded to, it is not improbable but Shakspeare wrote it *shot so trim*, which the players or printers, not perceiving the allusion, might alter to *true*. The former, as being the more humorous expression, seems most likely to have come from the mouth of Mercutio.<sup>2</sup>

In the 2nd Part of *Hen. IV.* act v. sc. 3, Falstaff is introduced affectedly saying to Pistoll,

“O base Assyrian knight, what is thy news?  
 Let king Cophetua know the truth thereof.”

<sup>1</sup> See above, preface to Song i. Book ii. of this vol. p. 106, 107.

<sup>2</sup> Since this conjecture was first made, it has been discovered that *shot so trim* was the genuine reading.—See Shakspeare, edit. 1793, xiv. 393.

These lines Dr. Warburton thinks were taken from an old bombast play of *King Cophetua*. No such play is, I believe, now to be found; but it does not therefore follow that it never existed. Many dramatic pieces are referred to by old writers, which are not now extant, or even mentioned in any list.<sup>3</sup> In the infancy of the stage, plays were often exhibited that were never printed.

It is probably in allusion to the same play, that Ben Jonson says in his Comedy of *Every Man in his Humour*, act iii. sc. 4:—

“I have not the heart to devour thee, an’ I might be made as *rich* as King Cophetua.”

At least there is no mention of King Cophetua’s *riches* in the present ballad, which is the oldest I have met with on the subject.

It is printed from Rich. Johnson’s *Crown Garland of Goulden Roses*, 1612, 12mo (where it is entitled simply, *A Song of a Beggar and a King*): corrected by another copy.

I READ that once in Affrica  
 A princely wight did raine,  
 Who had to name Cophetua,  
 As poets they did faine.  
 From natures lawes he did decline, 5  
 For sure he was not of my minde,  
 He cared not for women-kind,  
 But did them all disdaine.  
 But marke what hapned on a day;  
 As he out of his window lay, 10  
 He saw a beggar all in gray,  
 The which did cause his paine.  
 The blinded boy that shootes so trim  
 From heaven downe did hie,  
 He drew a dart and shot at him, 15  
 In place where he did lye:  
 Which soone did pierse him to the quicke,  
 And when he felt the arrow pricke,  
 Which in his tender heart did sticke,  
 He looketh as he would dye. 20  
 “What sudden chance is this,” quoth he,  
 “That I to love must subject be,  
 Which never thereto would agree,  
 But still did it defie?”

<sup>3</sup> See Mere’s *Wits Treas.* fol. 283. *Arte of Eng. Poes.* 1589, pp. 51, 111, 143, 169.



Then from the window he did come,  
And laid him on his bed ;  
A thousand heapes of care did runne  
Within his troubled head.

For now he meanes to crave her love,  
And now he seekes which way to proove  
How he his fancie might remoove,  
And not this beggar wed.

But Cupid had him so in snare,  
That this poor begger must prepare  
A salve to cure him of his care,  
Or els he would be dead.

And as he musing thus did lye,  
He thought for to devise  
How he might have her companie,  
That so did 'maze his eyes.

"In thee," quoth he, "doth rest my life ;  
For surely thou shalt be my wife,  
Or else this hand with bloody knife,  
The Gods shall sure suffice."

Then from his bed he soon arose,  
And to his pallace gate he goes ;  
Full little then this begger knowes  
When she the king espies.

"The gods preserve your majesty,"  
The beggers all gan cry ;  
"Vouchsafe to give your charity,  
Our childrens food to buy."

The king to them his purse did cast,  
And they to part it made great haste ;  
This silly woman was the last  
That after them did hye.

The king he cal'd her back againe,  
And unto her he gave his chaine ;  
And said, "With us you shal remaine  
Till such time as we dye.

For thou," quoth he, "shalt be my wife,  
And honoured for my queene ;

With thee I meane to lead my life,  
 As shortly shall be scene :  
 Our wedding shall appointed be, 65  
 And every thing in its degree ;  
 Come on," quoth he, "and follow me,  
 Thou shalt go shift thee cleane.  
 What is thy name, faire maid?" quoth he.  
 "Penelophon,<sup>4</sup> O King," quoth she : 70  
 With that she made a lowe courtsey ;  
 A trim one as I weene.  
 Thus hand in hand along they walke  
 Unto the king's pallace :  
 The king with courteous, comly talke 75  
 This begger doth embrace.  
 The begger blusheth scarlet red,  
 And straight againe as pale as lead,  
 But not a word at all she said,  
 She was in such amaze. 80  
 At last she spake with trembling voyce,  
 And said, "O King, I doe rejoyce  
 That you wil take me for your choyce,  
 And my degree so base."  
 And when the wedding day was come, 85  
 The king commanded strait  
 The noblemen, both all and some,  
 Upon the queene to wait.  
 And she behaved herself that day  
 As if she had never walkt the way ; 90  
 She had forgot her gowne of gray,  
 Which she did weare of late.  
 The proverbe old is come to passe,  
 The priest, when he begins his masse,  
 Forgets that ever clerke he was ; 95  
 He knowth not his estate.

Ver. 90, *i. e.* tramped the streets.

<sup>4</sup> Shakespeare (who alludes to this ballad in his *Love's Labour Lost*, act iv. sc. 1) gives the Beggar's name *Zenelophon*, according to all the old editions: but this seems to be a corruption; for *Penelophon*, in the text, sounds more like the name of a woman. The story of the King and the Beggar is also alluded to in *King Rich. II.* act. v. sc. 3.



Here you may read Cophetua.

Through long time fancie-fed,  
Compelled by the blinded boy

The begger for to wed :

100

He that did lovers lookes disdaine,  
To do the same was glad and faine,  
Or else he would himselfe have slaine,  
In storie, as we read.

Disdaine no whit. O lady deere,  
But pittie now thy servant heere,  
Least that it hap to thee this yeare,  
As to that king it did.

105

And thus they led a quiet life  
During their princely raine,  
And in a tombe were buried both,  
As writers sheweth plaine.

110

The lords they tooke it grievously,  
The ladies tooke it heavily,  
The commons cryed pitiously,

115

Their death to them was paine.  
Their fame did sound so passingly,  
That it did pierce the starry sky,  
And throughout all the world did flye  
To every princes realme.<sup>5</sup>

120

V. 105, Here the poet addresses himself to his mistress.

V. 112, *sheweth* was anciently the plur. numb.

An ingenious friend thinks the two last stanzas should change place.



## VII.

### Take thy Old Cloak about Thee

is supposed to have been originally a Scottish ballad. The reader here has an ancient copy in the English idiom, with an additional stanza (the 2d) never before printed. This curiosity is preserved in the Editor's folio MS., but not without corruptions, which are here removed by the assistance of the Scottish edit. Shakspeare in his *Othello*, act ii., has quoted one stanza, with some variations, which are here adopted : the old MS. readings are however given in the margin.

THIS winters weather itt waxeth cold,  
 And frost doth freeze on every hill,  
 And Boreas blowes his blasts soe bold  
 That all our cattell are like to spill.  
 Bell my wife, who loves noe strife,  
 She sayd unto me quietlye,  
 "Rise up, and save cow Crumbockes liffe,  
 Man, put thine old cloake about thee."

5

HE.

"O Bell, why dost thou flyte 'and scorne?'  
 Thou kenst my cloake is very thin;  
 Itt is soe bare and overworne,  
 A cricke he theron cannot runn:  
 Then Ile noe longer borrowe nor lend,  
 'For once Ile new appareld bee,  
 To-morrow Ile to towne and spend,'  
 For Ile have a new cloake about mee."

10

15

SHE.

"Cow Crumbocke is a very good cowe,  
 She ha beene alwayes true to the payle,  
 Shee has helpt us to butter and cheese, I trow,  
 And other things shee will not fayle;  
 I wold be loth to see her pine;  
 Good husband, counsell take of mee,  
 It is not for us to goe soe fine,  
 Man, take thine old cloake about thee."

20

HE.

"My cloake it was a verry good cloake,  
 Itt hath been alwayes true to the weare,  
 But now it is not worth a groat,  
 I have had it four and forty yeere;  
 Sometime itt was of cloth in graine,  
 'Tis now but a sigh clout as you may see;  
 It will neither hold out winde nor raine;  
 And Ile have a new cloake about mee."

25

30



SHE.

“ It is four and fortye yeeres agoe  
 Since the one of us the other did ken,  
 And we have had betwixt us towe,  
 Of children either nine or ten ;  
 Wee have brought them up to women and men  
 In the feare of God I trow they bee ;  
 And why wilt thou thyself misken ?  
 Man, take thine old cloake about thee.”

35

40

HE.

“ O Bell my wiffe, why dost thou floute !  
 Now is nowe, and then was then ;  
 Seeke now all the world throughout,  
 Thou kenst not clownes from gentlemen ;  
 They are clad in blacke, greene, yellowe, or ‘ gray,’  
 Soe far above their owne degree ;  
 Once in my life Ile ‘ doe as they,’  
 For Ile have a new cloake about mee.”

46

SHE.

“ King Stephen was a worthy peere,  
 His breeches cost him but a crowne ;  
 He held them sixpence all too deere ;  
 Therefore he calld the taylor Lowne.  
 He was a wight of high renowne,  
 And thouse but of a low degree ;  
 Itt's pride that putts the cuntrye downe ;  
 Then take thine old cloake about thee.”

50

55

HE.

‘ Bell my wife she loves not strife,  
 Yet she will lead me if she can ;  
 And oft, to live a quiet life,  
 I am forced to yield, though Ime good-man.’

60

Ver. 49, King Harry . . . a very good king. MS. V. 50, I trow  
 his hose cost but. MS. V. 51, He thought them 12d. too deere. MS.  
 V. 52, clowne. MS. V. 53, He was king and wore the crowne. MS.

Itt's not for a man with a woman to threape,  
 Unlesse he first give oer the plea ;  
 As wee began wee now mun leave,  
 And Ile take mine old cloake about mee.

---

VIII.

*Willow, Willow, Willow.*

It is from the following stanzas that Shakspeare has taken his song of the *Willow*, in his *Othello*, act iv. sc. 3, though somewhat varied, and applied by him to a female character. He makes Desdemona introduce it in this pathetic and affecting manner:—

“ My mother had a maid call'd Barbara:  
 She was in love ; and he she lov'd prov'd mad,  
 And did forsake her. She had a song of—Willow.  
 An old thing 'twas, but it express'd her fortune ;  
 And she dyed singing it.”—Ed. 1793, vol. xv. p. 613.

This is given from a black-letter copy in the Pepys Collection, thus entitled, “ *A Lovers Complaint, being forsaken of his Love. To a pleasant tune.*”

A POORE soule sat sighing under a sicamore tree ;  
 O willow, willow, willow !  
 With his hand on his bosom, his head on his knee :  
 O willow, willow, willow !  
 O willow, willow, willow ! 5  
 Sing, O the greene willow shall be my garlånd.  
 He sigh'd in his singing, and after each grone,  
 Come willow, &c.  
 “ I am dead to all pleasure, my true-love is gone.  
 O willow, &c. 10  
 Sing, O the greene willow shall be my garlånd.  
 “ My love she is turned ; untrue she doth prove ;  
 O willow, &c.  
 She renders me nothing but hate for my love.  
 O willow, &c. 15  
 Sing, O the greene willow, &c.



- “O pitty me” (cried he), “ye lovers, each one ;  
O willow, &c.  
Her heart’s hard as marble ; she rues not my mone.  
O willow, &c. 20  
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.”
- The cold streams ran by him, his eyes wept apace ,  
O willow, &c.  
The salt tears fell from him, which drowned his face.  
O willow, &c. 25  
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.
- The mute birds sate by him, made tame by his mones ;  
O willow, &c.  
The salt tears fell from him, which softened the stones.  
O willow, &c. 30  
Sing, O the greene willow shall be my garlând !
- “Let nobody blame me, her scornes I do prove ;  
O willow, &c.  
She was borne to be faire ; I, to die for her love.  
O willow, &c. 35  
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.
- “O that beauty should harbour a heart that’s so hard !  
Sing willow, &c.  
My true love rejecting without all regard.  
O willow, &c. 40  
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.
- “Let love no more boast him in palace, or bower ;  
O willow, &c.  
For women are trothles, and flote in an houre.  
O willow, &c. 45  
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.
- “But what helps complaining ? In vaine I complaine :  
O willow, &c.  
I must patiently suffer her scorne and disdaine.  
O willowe, &c. 50  
Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

"Come, all you forsaken, and sit down by me,  
O willow, &c.

He that 'plaines of his false love, mine's falser than she.  
O willow, &c.

55

Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

"The willow wreath weare I, since my love did fleet;  
O willow, &c,

A garland for lovers forsaken most meete.

O willow, &c.

60

Sing, O the greene willow shall be my garlånd!"

### PART THE SECOND.

"LOWE lay'd by my sorrow, begot by disdaine,  
O willow, willow, willow!

Against her too cruell, still, still I complaine.

O willow, willow, willow!

O willow, willow, willow!

5

Sing, O the greene willow shall be my garlånd!

"O love too injurious, to wound my poore heart,  
O willow, &c.

To suffer the triumph, and joy in my smart!

O willow, &c.

10

Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

"O willow, willow, willow! the willow garlånd,  
O willow, &c.

A sign of her falsenesse before me doth stand.

O willow, &c.

15

Sing, O the greene willow shall be my garlånd.

"As here it doth bid to despair and to dye,  
O willow, &c.

So hang it, friends, ore me in grave where I lye.

O willow, &c.

20

Sing, O the greene willow, &c.

"In grave where I rest mee, hang this to the view,  
O willow, &c.

Of all that doe knowe her, to blaze her untrue.

O willow, &c.

25

Sing, O the greene willow, &c.



- "With these words engraven, as epitaph meet,  
 O willow, &c.  
 'Here lyes one, drank poyson for potion most sweet.'  
 O willow, &c. 30  
 Sing, O the greene willow, &c.  
 "Though she thus unkindly hath scorned my love,  
 O willow, &c.  
 And carelesly smiles at the sorrowes I prove;  
 O willow, &c. 35  
 Sing, O the greene willow, &c.  
 "I cannot against her unkindly exclaim,  
 O willow, &c.  
 Cause once well I loved her, and honoured her name.  
 O willow, &c. 40  
 Sing, O the greene willow shall be my garlând.  
 "The name of her sounded so sweete in mine eare,  
 O willow, &c.  
 It rays'd my heart lightly, the name of my deare;  
 O willow, &c. 45  
 Sing, O the greene willow, &c.  
 "As then 'twas my comfort, it now is my griefe;  
 O willow, &c.  
 It now brings me anguish; then brought me reliefe.  
 O willow, &c. 50  
 Sing, O the greene willow, &c.  
 "Farewell, faire false-hearted, plaints end with my breath  
 O willow, willow, willow!  
 Thou dost loath me, I love thee, though cause of my  
 death.  
 O willow, willow, willow! 55  
 O willow, willow, willow!  
 Sing, O the greene willow shall be my garlând."

## IX.

Sir Lancelot du Lake.<sup>1</sup>

This ballad is quoted in Shakspeare's Second Part of *Henry IV.* act ii. sc. 4. The subject of it is taken from the ancient romance of *King Arthur* (commonly called *Morte Arthur*), being a poetical translation of chap. cviii. cix. cx. in Part 1st, as they stand in ed. 1634, 4to. In the older editions the chapters are differently numbered. This song is given from a printed copy, corrected in part by folio MS.

In the same Play of 2 *Henry IV.*, *Silence* hums a scrap of one of the old ballads of Robin Hood. It is taken from the following stanza of *Robin Hood and the Pindar of Wakefield*.

“All this beheard three wighty yeomen,  
 ’Twas Robin Hood, Scarlet, and John:  
 With that they espyd the jolly Pindar  
 As he sate under a thorne.”

That ballad may be found on every stall, and therefore is not here reprinted.

WHEN Arthur first in court began,  
 And was approvèd king,  
 By force of armes great victorys wonne,  
 And conquest home did bring;

Then into England straight he came 5  
 With fifty good and able  
 Knights that resorted unto him,  
 And were of the Round Table.

And many justs and turnaments 10  
 Wherto were many prest,  
 Wherein some knights did farr excell,  
 And eke surmount the rest.

But one Sir Lancelot du Lake,  
 Who was approvèd well,  
 He for his deeds and feates of armes 15  
 All others did excell.

<sup>1</sup> The folio MS. copy of this ballad is so mutilated that we owe more than half the present version to the ingenuity of Percy.—Editor.



When he had rested him a while,  
 In play, and game, and sportt,  
 He said he wold goe prove himselfe,  
 In some adventurous sort.

20

He armèd rode in forrest wide,  
 And met a damsell faire,  
 Who told him of adventures great,  
 Whereto he gave good eare.

“Why shold I not?” quoth Lancelott the,  
 “For that cause came I hither.”  
 “Thou seemst,” quoth she, “a knight full good,”  
 And I will bring thee thither,

25

“Wheras a mighty knight doth dwell,  
 That now is of great fame;  
 Therefore tell me what knight thou art,  
 And what may be thy name.”

30

“My name is Lancelot du Lake.”  
 Quoth she, “It likes me than;  
 Here dwelles a knight who never was  
 Yet matcht with any man;

35

“Who has in prison threescore knights  
 And four, that he did wound;  
 Knights of King Arthurs court they be,  
 And of his Table Round.”

40

She brought him to a river side,  
 And also to a tree,  
 Whereon a copper bason hung,  
 And many shields to see.

He struck soe hard, the bason broke:  
 And Tarquin soon he spyed:  
 Who drove a horse before him fast,  
 Whereon a knight lay tyed.

45

Ver. 18, to sportt. MS.

Ver. 29, *where* is often used by our  
 old writers for *whereas*: here it is just the contrary.

“Sir Knight,” then sayd Sir Lancelott,  
“Bring me that horse-load hither, 50  
And lay him downe, and let him rest ;  
Weel try our force together.

“For, as I understand, thou hast,  
Soe far as thou art able,  
Done great despite and shame unto 55  
The knights of the Round Table.”

“If thou be of the Table Round,”  
Quoth Tarquin, speedilye,  
“Both thee and all thy fellowship 60  
I utterly defye.”

“That’s over much,” quoth Lancelott tho,  
“Defend thee by and by.”  
They sett their speares unto their steeds,  
And each att other flye.

They coucht their speares, (their horses ran, 65  
As though there had been thunder) ;  
And strucke them each immidst their shields,  
Wherewith they broke in sunder.

Their horsses backes brake under them,  
The knights were both astound ; 70  
To avoyd their horsses they made great haste,  
And light upon the ground.

They tooke them to their shields full fast,  
Their swords they drew out than ;  
With mighty strokes most eagerlye 75  
Each at the other ran.

They wounded were, and bled full sore,  
They both for breath did stand,  
And leaning on their swordes awhile,  
Quoth Tarquine, “Hold thy hand, 80

“And tell to me what I shall aske ;”  
“Say on,” quoth Lancelot tho.  
“Thou art,” quoth Tarquine, “the best knight  
That ever I did know ;



“And like a knight that I did hate ;  
 Soe that thou be not hee,  
 I will deliver all the rest,  
 And eke accord with thee.” 85

“That is well sayd,” quoth Lancelott tho,  
 “But sith it must be soe,  
 What knight is that thou hatest thus ?  
 I pray thee to me show.” 90

“His name is Lancelot du Lake,  
 He slew my brother deere ;  
 Him I suspect of all the rest :  
 I would I had him here.” 95

“Thy wish thou hast, but yet unknowne ;  
 I am Lancelot du Lake,  
 Now knight of Arthurs Table Round ;  
 King Hauds son of Schuwake ; 100

“And I desire thee do thy worst.”  
 “Ho, ho,” quoth Tarquin tho,  
 “One of us two shall end our lives,  
 Before that we do go.

“If thou be Lancelot du Lake 105  
 Then welcome shalt thou bee ;  
 Wherefore see thou thyself defend,  
 For now defye I thee.”

They buckled then together so,  
 Like unto wild boares rashing,<sup>2</sup> 110  
 And with their swords and shields they ran  
 At one another slashing.

<sup>2</sup> *Rashing* seems to be the old hunting term to express the stroke made by the wild-boar with his fangs. To *rase* has apparently a meaning something similar. See Mr. Steevens' Note to *King Lear*, act iii. sc. 7 (ed. 1793, vol. xiv. p. 193), where the quartos read,

“Nor thy fierce sister  
 In his anointed flesh *rash* boarish fangs.”

So in *King Richard III.*, act iii. sc. 2 (vol. x., pp. 567, 583),

“He dreamt  
 To-night the boar had *raised* off his helm.”

The ground besprinkled was with blood,  
 Tarquin began to yield;  
 For he gave backe for wearinesse,  
 And lowe did beare his shield.

115

This soone Sir Lancelot espyde,  
 He leapt upon him then,  
 He pull'd him downe upon his knee,  
 And rushing off his helm,

120

Forthwith he strucke his necke in two;  
 And when he had soe done,  
 From prison, threescore knights and four  
 Delivered everye one.



## X.

## Corydon's Farewell to Phillis

is an attempt to paint a lover's irresolution, but so poorly executed, that it would not have been admitted into this collection, if it had not been quoted in Shakspeare's *Twelfth Night*, act ii. sc. 3.—It is found in a little ancient miscellany, entitled *The Golden Garland of Princely Delights*, 12mo, bl. let.

In the same scene of the *Twelfth Night*, Sir Toby sings a scrap of an old ballad, which is preserved in the Pepys Collection (vol. i. pp. 33, 496), but as it is not only a poor dull performance, but also very long, it will be sufficient here to give the first stanza:—

## THE BALLAD OF CONSTANT SUSANNA.

“There dwelt a man in Babylon  
 Of reputation great by fame;  
 He took to wife a faire woman,  
 Susanna she was callde by name:  
 A woman fair and vertuous:  
 Lady, Lady:  
 Why should we not of her learn thus  
 To live godly?”

If this song of *Corydon*, &c., has not more merit, it is at least an evil of less magnitude.



FAREWELL, dear love ; since thou wilt needs be gone,  
Mine eyes do shew, my life is almost done.

Nay I will never die, so long as I can spie  
There be many mo, though that she doe goe,  
There be many mo, I fear not :  
Why then let her goe, I care not.

5

Farewell, farewell ; since this I find is true,  
I will not spend more time in wooing you ;  
But I will seek elsewhere, if I may find love there.  
Shall I bid her goe ? what and if I doe ?  
Shall I bid her goe and spare not ?  
O no, no, no, I dare not.

10

Ten thousand times farewell ;—yet stay a while :—  
Sweet, kiss me once : sweet kisses time beguile.  
I have no power to move. How now am I in love ?  
Wilt thou needs be gone ? Go then, all is one.  
Wilt thou needs be gone ? Oh, hie thee !  
Nay stay, and do no more deny me.

16

Once more adieu, I see loath to depart  
Bids oft adieu to her, that holds my heart.  
But seeing I must lose thy love, which I did choose,  
Goe thy way for me, since that may not be.  
Goe thy ways for me. But whither ?  
Goe, oh, but where I may come thither.

20

What shall I doe ? my love is now departed.  
She is as fair, as she is cruel-hearted.  
She would not be intreated, with prayers oft repeated :  
If she come no more, shall I die therefore ?  
If she come no more, what care I ?  
Faith, let her goe, or come, or tarry.

25

30



## XI.

## Gernutus the Jew of Venice.

In the *Life of Pope Sixtus V.*, translated from the Italian of Greg. Leti, by the Rev. Mr. Farnsworth, folio is a remarkable passage to the following effect :—

"It was reported in Rome, that Drake had taken and plundered St. Domingo in Hispaniola, and carried off an immense booty. This account came in a private letter to Paul Secchi, a very considerable merchant in the city, who had large concerns in those parts, which he had insured. Upon receiving this news, he sent for the insurer, Sampson Ceneda, a Jew, and acquainted him with it. The Jew, whose interest it was to have such a report thought false, gave many reasons why it could not possibly be true, and at last worked himself into such a passion, that he said, I'll lay you a pound of my flesh it is a lye. Secchi, who was of a fiery hot temper, replied, I'll lay you a thousand crowns against a pound of your flesh that it is true. The Jew accepted the wager, and articles were immediately executed betwixt them. That if Secchi won, he should himself cut the flesh with a sharp knife from whatever part of the Jew's body he pleased. The truth of the account was soon confirmed; and the Jew was almost distracted, when he was informed that Secchi had solemnly sworn he would compel him to an exact performance of his contract. A report of this transaction was brought to the Pope, who sent for the parties, and being informed of the whole affair, said, When contracts are made, it is but just they should be fulfilled, as this shall: take a knife therefore, Secchi, and cut a pound of flesh from any part you please of the Jew's body. We advise you, however, to be very careful; for if you cut but a scruple more or less than your due, you shall certainly be hanged."

The editor of that book is of opinion, that the scene between Shylock and Antonio in the *Merchant of Venice* is taken from this incident. But Mr. Warton, in his ingenious *Observations on the Faerie Queen*, vol. i. p. 128, has referred it to the following ballad. Mr. Warton thinks this ballad was written before Shakspeare's play, as being not so circumstantial, and having more of the nakedness of an original. Besides, it differs from the play in many circumstances, which a mere copyist, such as we may suppose the ballad-maker to be, would hardly have given himself the trouble to alter. Indeed he expressly informs us, that he had his story from the Italian writers.—See the *Connoisseur*, vol. i. No. 16.

After all, one would be glad to know what authority Leti had for the foregoing fact, or at least for connecting it with the taking of St. Domingo by Drake; for this expedition did not happen till 1585, and it is very certain that a play of the *Jewe*, "representing the greedinesse of worldly chusers, and bloody minds of usurers," had been exhibited at the play-house, called *The Bull*, before the year 1579, being mentioned in Steph. Gosson's *Schoole of Abuse*,<sup>1</sup> which was printed in that year.

As for Shakspeare's *Merchant of Venice*, the earliest edition known of it is in quarto, 1600; though it had been exhibited before the year 1598, being mentioned, together with eleven other of his plays, in Mere's *Wits Treasury*, &c., 1598, 12mo, fol. 282.—See Malone's *Shakspeare*.



The following is printed from an ancient black-letter copy in the Pepys Collection,<sup>2</sup> entitled, "A new Song, shewing the crueltie of GERNUTUS, a JEWE, who lending to a merchant an hundred crowns, would have a pound of fleshe, because he could not pay him at the time appointed. To the tune of *Black and Yellow*."

## THE FIRST PART.

In Venice towne not long agoe  
A cruel Jew did dwell,  
Which lived all on usurie,  
As Italian writers tell.

Gernutus called was the Jew, 5  
Which never thought to dye,  
Nor ever yet did any good  
To them in streets that lie.

His life was like a barrow hogge,  
That liveth many a day, 10  
Yet never once doth any good,  
Until men will him slay.

Or like a filthy heap of dung,  
That lieth in a whoard;  
Which never can do any good, 15  
Till it be spread abroad.

So fares it with the usurer,  
He cannot sleep in rest,  
For feare the thiefe will him pursue  
To plucke him from his nest. 20

His heart doth thinke on many a wile,  
How to deceive the poore;  
His mouth is almost ful of mucke,  
Yet still he gapes for more.

His wife must lend a shilling, 25  
For every weeke a penny,  
Yet bring a pledge that is double worth,  
If that you will have any.

<sup>2</sup> Compared with the Ashmole copy.

And see, likewise, you keepe your day,  
Or else you loose it all:  
This was the living of the wife,  
Her cow she did it call.

30

Within that citie dwelt that time  
A marchant of great fame,  
Which being distressed in his need,  
Unto Gernutus came :

35

Desiring him to stand his friend  
For twelve month and a day ;  
To lend to him an hundred crownes ;  
And he for it would pay

40

Whatsoever he would demand of him,  
And pledges he should have :  
" No " (quoth the Jew with fearing lookes),  
" Sir, aske what you will have.

" No penny for the loane of it  
For one year you shall pay ;  
You may doe me as good a turne,  
Before my dying day.

45

" But we will have a merry jeast,  
For to be talked long :  
You shall make me a bond," quoth he,  
" That shall be large and strong :

50

" And this shall be the forfeiture,  
Of your owne fleshe a pound :  
If you agree, make you the bond,  
And here is a hundred crownes."

55

" With right good will ! " the marchant says :  
And so the bond was made.  
When twelve month and a day drew on,  
That backe it should be payd,

60

Ver. 32, her *cow*, &c., seems to have suggested to Shakspeare Shylock's argument for usury taken from Jacob's management of Laban's sheep, act ., to which Antonio replies,

" Was this inserted to make interest good ?

Or are your gold and silver *ewes* and rams ?

*Shylock*. I cannot tell, I make it *breed as fast*."



The marchants ships were all at sea,  
 And money came not in ;  
 Which way to take, or what to doe  
 To thinke he doth begin.

And to Gernutus strait he comes, 65  
 With cap and bended knee ;  
 And sayde to him, " Of curtesie,  
 I pray you beare with mee.

" My day is come, and I have not 70  
 The money for to pay :  
 And little good the forfeiture  
 Will doe you, I dare say."

" With all my heart," Gernutus sayd,  
 " Commaund it to your minde :  
 In thinges of bigger waight then this 75  
 You shall me ready finde."

He goes his way ; the day once past,  
 Gernutus doth not slacke  
 To get a sergiant presently,  
 And clapt him on the backe. 80

And layd him into prison strong,  
 And sued his bond withall ;  
 And when the judgement day was come,  
 For judgement he did call.

The marchants friends came thither fast, 85  
 With many a weeping eye,  
 For other means they could not find,  
 But he that day must dye.

#### THE SECOND PART.

" Of the Jews crueltie : setting foorth the mercifulnesse of the Judge  
 towards the Marchant. To the tune of *Blacke and Yellow*."

SOME offered for his hundred crownes  
 Five hundred for to pay ;  
 And some a thousand, two or three,  
 Yet still he did deny.

- And at the last ten thousand crownes 5  
They offered, him to save :  
Gernutus sayd, "I will no gold,  
My forfeite I will have.
- "A pound of fleshe is my demand,  
And that shall be my hire." 10  
Then sayd the judge, "Yet, good my friend,  
Let me of you desire
- "To take the flesh from such a place,  
As yet you let him live :  
Do so, and lo ! an hundred crownes 15  
To thee here will I give."
- "No, no," quoth he, "no, judgment here ;  
For this it shall be tride ;  
For I will have my pound of fleshe  
From under his right side." 20
- It grieved all the companie  
His crueltie to see,  
For neither friend nor foe could helpe  
But he must spoyled bee.
- The bloudie Jew now ready is 25  
With whetted blade in hand,<sup>1</sup>  
To spoyle the bloud of innocent,  
By forfeit of his bond.
- And as he was about to strike  
In him the deadly blow, 30  
"Stay" (quoth the judge) "thy crueltie ;  
I charge thee to do so.
- "Sith needs thou wilt thy forfeit have,  
Which is of flesh a pound,  
See that thou shed no drop of bloud, 35  
Nor yet the man confound.

<sup>1</sup> The passage in Shakspeare bears so strong a resemblance to this, as to render it probable that the one suggested the other.—See act iv. sc. 2.

*Bass.* "Why doest thou whet thy knife so earnestly?" &c.



"For if thou doe, like murderer  
Thou here shalt hanged be :  
Likewise of flesh see that thou cut  
No more than longes to thee.

40

"For if thou take either more or lesse,  
To the value of a mite,  
Thou shalt be hanged presently,  
As is both law and right."

Gernutus now waxt franticke mad,  
And wotes not what to say ;  
Quoth he at last, "Ten thousand crownes  
I will that he shall pay ;

45

"And so I graunt to set him free."  
The judge doth answere make ;  
"You shall not have a penny given ;  
Your forfeiture now take."

50

At the last he doth demaund  
But for to have his owne :  
"No," quoth the judge, "doe as you list,  
Thy judgement shall be showne.

55

"Either take your pound of flesh," quoth he,  
"Or cancell me your bond :"  
"O cruell judge," then quoth the Jew,  
"That doth against me stand !"

60

And so with griping grieved mind  
He biddeth them fare-well :  
'Then' all the people prays'd the Lord,  
That ever this heard tell.

Good people, that doe heare this song,  
For trueth I dare well say,  
That many a wretch as ill as hee  
Doth live now at this day ;

65

That seeketh nothing but the spoyle  
Of many a wealthey man,  
And for to trap the innocent  
Deviseth what they can.

70

From whome the Lord deliver me,  
 And every Christian too,  
 And send to them like sentence eke  
 That meaneth so to doe.

75

\* \* Since the first edition of this book was printed, the Editor hath had reason to believe, that both Shakspeare and the author of this ballad, are indebted for their story of the Jew (however they came by it) to an Italian Novel, which was first printed at Milan in the year 1554, in a book entitled, *Il Pecorone, nel quale si contengono Cinquanta Novelle antiche*, &c., republished at Florence about the year 1748 or 9. The author was Ser. Giovanni Fiorentino, who wrote in 1378; thirty years after the time in which the scene of Boccace's *Decameron* is laid.—Vide Manni, *Istoria del Decamerone di Giov. Boccac.* 4to, Fior. 1744.

That Shakspeare had his plot from the Novel itself, is evident from his having some incidents from it which are not found in the ballad: and I think it will also be found that he borrowed from the ballad some hints that were not suggested by the Novel. (See above, pt. ii. ver. 25, &c., where instead of that spirited description of *the whetted blade*, &c., the prose narrative coldly says, "The Jew had prepared a razor," &c. See also some other passages in the same piece.) This however is spoken with diffidence, as I have at present before me only the abridgment of the Novel which Mr. Johnson has given us at the end of his Commentary on Shakspeare's play. The translation of the Italian story at large is not easy to be met with, having I believe never been published, though it was printed some years ago with this title—"THE NOVEL, from which the *Merchant of Venice* written by Shakspear is taken, translated from the Italian. To which is added, a Translation of a Novel from the *Decamerone* of Boccaccio. London, Printed for M. Cooper, 1755," 8vo.

---

## XII.

### The Passionate Shepherd to his Love.

This beautiful sonnet is quoted in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, act iii. sc. 1, and is ascribed (together with *the Reply*) to Shakspeare himself by all the modern editors of his smaller poems. A copy of this Madrigal, containing only four stanzas (the 4th and 6th being wanting), accompanied with the first of the answer, being printed in *The Passionate Pilgrime, and Sonnets to sundry Notes of Musicke*, by Mr. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. Lond., printed for W. Jaggard, 1599. Thus was this sonnet, &c., published as Shakspeare's in his life-time.

And yet there is good reason to believe that (not Shakspeare, but) Christopher Marlow wrote the song, and Sir Walter Raleigh the



*Nymph's Reply.* For so we are positively assured by Isaac Walton, a writer of some credit, who has inserted them both in his *Compleat Angler*,<sup>1</sup> under the character of "that smooth song, which was made by Kit. Marlow, now at least fifty years ago; and . . . an Answer to it, which was made by Sir Walter Raleigh in his younger days. . . . Old-fashioned poetry, but choicely good." It also passed for Marlow's in the opinion of his contemporaries; for in the old Poetical Miscellany, entitled *England's Helicon*, it is printed with the name of Chr. Marlow subjoined to it; and the Reply is subscribed *Ignoto*, which is known to have been a signature of Sir Walter Raleigh. With the same signature *Ignoto*, in that Collection, is an imitation of Marlow's, beginning thus,

"Come live with me, and be my dear,  
And we will revel all the year,  
In plains and groves," &c.

Upon the whole, I am inclined to attribute them to Marlow and Raleigh, notwithstanding the authority of Shakspeare's Book of Sonnets. For it is well known, that as he took no care of his own compositions, so was he utterly regardless of what spurious things were fathered upon him. *Sir John Oldcastle*, the *London Prodigal*, and the *Yorkshire Tragedy*, were printed with his name at full length in the title-pages while he was living, which yet were afterwards rejected by his first editors, Heminge and Condell, who were his intimate friends (as he mentions both in his will), and therefore no doubt had good authority for setting them aside.<sup>2</sup>

The following sonnet appears to have been (as it deserved) a great favourite with our earlier poets: for besides the imitation above mentioned, another is to be found among Donne's Poems, entitled *The Bait*, beginning thus,

"Come live with me, and be my love,  
And we will some new pleasures prove  
Of golden sands," &c.

As for Chr. Marlow, who was in high repute for his dramatic writings, he lost his life by a stab received in a brothel, before the year 1593.—See A. Wood, i. 138.

COME live with me, and be my love,  
And we wil all the pleasures prove  
That hils and vallies, dale and field,  
And all the craggy mountains yield.

<sup>1</sup> First printed in the year 1653, but probably written some time before.

<sup>2</sup> Since the above was written, Mr. Malone, with his usual discernment, hath rejected the stanzas in question from the other Sonnets, &c., of Shakspeare, in his correct edition of *The Passionate Pilgrim*, &c.—See his Shakspeare, vol. x., p. 340.

There will we sit upon the rocks,  
 And see the shepherds feed their flocks  
 By shallow rivers, to whose falls  
 Melodious birds sing madrigals.

There will I make thee beds of roses,  
 With a thousand fragrant posies;  
 A cap of flowers, and a kirtle  
 Imbrodered all with leaves of mirtle;

A gown made of the finest wool  
 Which from our pretty lambs we pull;  
 Fair-linèd slippers for the cold,  
 With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivie buds,  
 With coral clasps and amber studs:  
 And if these pleasures may thee move,  
 Then live with me, and be my love.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing  
 For thy delight each May morning:  
 If these delights thy mind may move,  
 Then live with me, and be my love.

#### THE NYMPH'S REPLY.

If that the World and Love were young,  
 And truth in every shepherd's tongue,  
 These pretty pleasures might me move  
 To live with thee, and be thy love.

But time drives flocks from field to fold,  
 When rivers rage, and rocks grow cold,  
 And Philomel becometh dumb,  
 And all complain of cares to come.

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields  
 To wayward winter reckoning yield;  
 A honey tongue, a heart of gall,  
 Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.

V. 15, Percy's text has "slippers lin'd choicely."—Editor.



